THERE IS VERY LITTLE MARGIN BETWEEN THE LEFT AND RIGHT PAGES

780.92 S3927ba

780.92 S3927ba
Basch
Schumann
$3.50.
718102

Keep Your Card in This Pocket

Books will be issued only on presentation of proper library cards.

Unless labeled otherwise, books may be retained for two weeks. Borrowers finding books marked, defaced or mutilated are expected to report same at library desk; otherwise the last borrower will be held responsible for all imperfections discovered.

The card holder is responsible for all books drawn on this card.

Penalty for over-due books 2c a day plus cost of notices.

Lost cards and change of residence must be reported promptly.

Public Library
Kansas City, Mo.

TENSION ENVELOPE CORP.

KANSAS CITY, MO PUBLIC LIBRARY
n 0001 4536382 6

SCHUMANN: *A LIFE OF SUFFERING*

MUSICAL PERSONALITIES

COSIMA WAGNER
by Richard Count du Moulin Eckart
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ERNEST NEWMAN

BRAHMS
by Walter Niemann

THE UNCONSCIOUS BEETHOVEN
by Ernest Newman

MY MUSICAL LIFE
by Nickolai Rimsky-Korsakoff
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY CARL VAN VECHTEN

MOUSSORGSKY
by Oskar von Riesemann

MANUEL DE FALLA AND SPANISH MUSIC
by J. B. Trend

LETTERS OF HANS VON BÜLOW
ntroduction by
Moulin Eckart
THE TRANSI) WITH A PREFACE AND
TT GODDARD

These are B ished by Alfred A. Knopf

SCHUMANN IN 1839

After the lithograph by Kriehuber

SCHUMANN

A LIFE OF SUFFERING

VICTOR BASCH

Professor of Aesthetics, University of Paris

Translated, from the French, by

CATHERINE ALISON PHILLIPS

Alfred · A · Knopf

NEW YORK MCMXXXI

COPYRIGHT 1931 BY ALFRED : A : KNOPF INC.

All rights reserved—no part of this book may be reprinted in any form without permission in writing from the publisher

Originally published as
La Vie Douloureuse de Schumann

Copyright, 1928 by
Librairie Félix Alcan,
Paris

FIRST EDITION

SE 1 '31

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IS SCHUMANN'S LIFE WORTH RELATING IN DETAIL? The answer is both yes and no.

If the reader is capable of taking an interest only in brilliant, variegated lives, traversed by the vivid lightning-flashes of unbridled passions, and drawing a charm from those innumerable feminine figures, mysterious or piquant, by which the affections of the hero have been attracted in turn—then the answer will be no.

But if the story of a simple life is worth telling—a life monotonous in appearance, but in reality full of variety and more complex and dramatic than that of such great enchanters as Liszt and Wagner, because fuller of deep experience and painful suffering—a life containing an inward drama whose conflicts, clashes, victories, and defeats are simply the vicissitudes of a soul developing freely or checked by obstacles—then the answer will be yes.

It will again be yes if we have grasped the fact that Schumann's music is, to a greater extent than any other, a music of the soul, the elemental, spontaneous, and sincere expression of all the emotions of a thrilling, quivering, trembling heart.

Lastly, the answer will also be yes if those who have fallen under the spell of this interpreter of moral suffering and palpitating emotion, of aspirations towards an Infinite full of mystery, and descents into

unfathomable abysses, are right in wishing to acquaint themselves in detail with the events which left their trace on his earthly existence—events which, though not very picturesque, since they concern only the heart, are none the less great by virtue of the stupendous reaction which they produced upon the susceptibilities of him whom they affected.

On January 24, 1839 Schumann wrote to his fiancée as follows: "It often seems to me that you attach too little value in music to what you yourself are as a girl: namely, to what is intimate, simple, lovable, and unartificial. What you want most are storms and lightning-flashes all at once, and always what is new and never was before. But there are also old, eternal conditions and moods which govern us. The romantic does not lie in figures and forms; it will be present in any case, provided only that the composer is a poet."

I should like to apply what Schumann says here about his music to his life—for in this passage he is speaking of his life and defending it. Its interest does not lie in its "figures and forms," but in its homely, domestic poetry—if I may use the expression—which is, none the less, so profound and arresting, if one can but reveal it, and so intensely tragic if we consider its concluding scenes, for which all the preceding ones are a preparation.

My book is entirely based upon the two volumes of Schumann's *Jugendbriefe (Youthful Letters)* and other letters, and on the diary of Robert and Clara Schumann, as presented to us in B. Litzmann's masterly biography of Robert's wife. I have been so fortunate

as to be able to use the correspondence between Clara and Brahms *(Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Briefe,* Leipzig, 1927), which so opportunely completes what we had learnt from Litzmann and from Max Kalbeck's monumental biography of Brahms. This correspondence and the reminiscences *(Erinnerungen,* Berlin, 1926) of Eugenie Schumann, Robert's youngest daughter—which are, for the rest, of quite trifling importance—exhaust, I think, the sources which might still be reckoned upon. The time has now arrived when we may try to sum up all that we know about the beloved master.

Paris, September 30, 1927.

TABLE *of* CONTENTS

Preface v

I. *Childhood and Youth (1810–28)* 3

II. *Years of Apprenticeship (April 1828–October 1830)* 23
Leipzig and Heidelberg
I. LEIPZIG
II. HEIDELBERG

III. *The New Life: Schumann as Musician and Musical Critic.—The Davidsbündler.. The* Neue Zeitschrift für Musik.—*Schumann's Critical Work.—An Abortive Love-affair: Ernestine von Fricken.—Leipzig (1830–35)* 45

IV. *The Romance of Schumann's Marriage: the Struggle for Clara. Leipzig-Vienna-Leipzig (1835–40)* 93

V. *The Height of his Achievement and the Decline of his Powers.—Leipzig.—The Russian Tour.—Dresden.—Düsseldorf.—Tour in Holland.—Attempt at Suicide—Endenich.—The Last Agony and the Deliverance. (1840–56)* 165

VI. *Epilogue.—Clara.—Clara and Brahms.—The Growing Fame of Schumann's Music* 231

Index To Schumann's Works *follows page* 243

Index of Names *follows page* iv

LIST *of* ILLUSTRATIONS

Schumann in 1839 FRONTISPIECE
After the lithograph by Kriehuber

Clara Wieck 98

Robert Schumann 152
After the drawing by Eduard Bendemann

Robert and Clara Schumann 166
After the relief by Rietschel

SCHUMANN: *A LIFE OF SUFFERING*

Childhood and Youth
(1810–28)

BY WHAT COMPARISONS MAY THE LIFE OF ROBERT Schumann best be symbolized? It may be described as an idyll, with tragic elements latent in it from the first, and ending in a tragedy. Or it may be compared to a musical theme, soaring upwards, pure and chaste, irradiated with the white light of celestial beatitude, and melodious with all the graces of life's spring-tide and all the aspirations of young love; yet linked with, and, as it were, overlapped by a counter-theme, which, side by side with these dreams of an ardent midsummer evening, called up the distorted nightmares of a winter night, peopled with inexpressible tortures. Here is a human creature upon whom beneficient fairies had showered in profusion their rarest gifts: beauty, candour, a quivering sensibility, enthusiasm for all that is great and noble, communion with the marvels of nature and the mystery of men's souls, and genius to express them in language hitherto unheard; but whom a single jealous fairy crushed by her curse, which, at first comparatively ineffectual, ended by annulling all the virtues of this privileged being, and changing him into a lamentable and pitiful spectacle.

If we are to enter into this life and make it live once more, we must escape from the tumults, complications, refinements, and brutal realities of our post-war world and plunge into the vanished and almost

legendary Germany of the beginning of the last century; a provincial Germany to which the sounds of the great world penetrated so faintly that the inner life could develop in full freedom and to its full extent; a little town of Saxony where the country-side was as yet unprofaned by factory chimneys, and men's souls had not yet lost their bloom by a feverish absorption in trade; where romanticism had softened and enervated men's minds and made them nebulous; where the sublime words and grave melodies of the heroes of literature and music fell on attentive ears; where everyday life, slow, heavy, sluggish, and calm, was shot through with reminiscences of the verses of Klopstock, Schiller, and Goethe and the melodies of Haydn, Mozart, and Weber; where the girls would gaze languorously at the heavens, like Werther's Charlotte, while cutting bread and butter for their little brothers, and where the young men would rhapsodize in the exalted style of Jean Paul's adolescent heroes, while draining innumerable glasses of beer.

The intellectual centre of these little towns was, as a rule, the book-shop, where the local budget of news took shape and was talked over in the evenings, as the customers turned the pages of the latest literary novelties from Leipzig, and exchanged comments on the great events which followed one upon the other with such dramatic diversity at the opening of the nineteenth century.

It was in such a city of books as this, at Zwickau, that Robert Schumann was born on June 8, 1810. It is not without interest to record that the cradle of this baby, who, on reaching man's estate, was so long to

waver between music and the literature which surrounded him from infancy, was sheltered beneath the wing of the Muses.

It was his father, Friedrich August Gottlieb, eldest son of the pastor of Weida, who founded the house and developed it to a high degree of prosperity by his work and intelligence. Schumann's father possessed the ardent, enthusiastic nature of an artist: like more eminent men than is supposed, Robert was above all his father's son. We know that in his youth the father had had such a passion for Milton and Young, the author of *Night Thoughts,* that "he had often felt himself on the verge of madness." For a time he attended lectures at the University of Leipzig; he wrote a novel, *Ritterszenen und Mönchenerzählungen;* and then, since he had not enough means to devote himself to writing books, he decided to sell them and publish them. But he could not resign himself to being a mere intermediary and became one of the most prolific authors published by his house. He left sixteen volumes, among which, besides commercial text-books, encyclopædias, and anthologies, were translations of Byron's *Childe Harold* and *Beppo,* and of Scott. An affectionate father, he supervised the intellectual development of his children with the most watchful solicitude and followed with particularly ardent interest the gradual unfolding of his youngest son's gifts —the son who seemed destined to realize what in himself had been only a fleeting dream. Himself impressionable, nervous, and melancholy, and endowed with artistic gifts, he was capable of understanding and encouraging those of his son. One of the boy's first

misfortunes was to lose this sure and judicious guide at the age of sixteen.

His mother, Johanna Christiana Schnabel, was the daughter of a surgeon at Zeitz. Intelligent, though not cultivated, she possessed exalted sensibilities, held in check by her strict bringing-up and narrow middle-class traditions. At the end of her life her romantic tendencies seem to have become exaggerated to the point of eccentricity. She devoted herself with passionate tenderness to Robert, her Benjamin, whom she called the "bright spot *(lichter Punkt)*" of her existence. But she was too much attached to her middle-class ideals not to regard her son's artistic leanings with an anxious eye. Though she did not oppose his vocation, yet, owing to a somewhat short-sighted excess of solicitude, she would not allow him to abandon himself to it entirely. In spite of his repugnance, she forced him to study law at the same time as music, since it might lead to a more secure career. When she at last yielded to his entreaties, though undoubtedly not too late, it was, all the same, late in the day. We cannot help thinking of what Grillparzer wrote about Schumann: "I have always thought that an artist who goes mad has been forced to struggle against his own inner nature." However this may be, it may be said that Schumann's artistic development would have been more normal if, at an age when it is easily mastered, he had acquired that theoretical knowledge the lack of which hampers even the most overmastering musical instinct.

Robert had three brothers and a sister, all of whom he survived. None of them seems to have been exceptionally gifted, or occupied a great place in our hero's

life. He was on the most affectionate terms with them, and showed a decided preference for his eldest brother's wife, Therese, who was one of his most assiduous correspondents and confidants. He suffered terribly at the premature death of his brother Karl. Lastly, it should be noted that his only sister, Emilie, who was carried off by consumption at the age of nineteen, had been insane for many years. Romantic tendencies, a quiveringly emotional nature, passionate exaltation, and madness: such are the traits which we find in Schumann's family and shall find again in him, transfigured by genius.

His childhood was tranquil and happy. In his many moments of melancholy he never ceased to recall it lovingly. His music is peopled with memories of his early years. He knows how to speak of the very young and to the very young like no musician before or after him. But in spite of all the struggles and sorrows which he had to go through, his whole being preserved, as it were, a lasting fragrance of childlike ingenuousness. Handsome and charming, he was much spoilt by his mother and godmother, the widow of the burgomaster of Zwickau, and perhaps this over-indulgence in his childhood was an insufficient discipline for the extreme irritability, impressionabilty, and obstinacy that were to characterize Schumann's temperament. At the age of six he was sent to a private school kept by Dr. Dőhner, where his reports noted that he was a good little pupil without exceptional ability, showing signs of an affectionate, ambitious, and candid nature. At the age of seven he started learning the piano from

Kuntsch, the *baccalaureus*, a self-taught organist with no regular method or command of his art.

What strikes us in the accounts which we have of Schumann's intellectual development is that, no sooner had he mastered the rudiments, than the creative instinct awoke within him in literature and music simultaneously, and even, if we examine the matter more closely, in literature sooner than in music. As he was a voracious reader, his imagination would set to work upon what he had read and dramatize it and he would organize little theatrical performances with his brothers, in which his father did not scorn to take part. At the same time he would try, as the young Beethoven had done, to represent the character of his little friends in his improvisations at the piano. No doubt too much importance should not be attached to these anecdotes. But what we should bear in mind is that, so soon as the creative instinct made itself felt in Schumann, he wavered between poetry and music, and that, from the very earliest manifestations of his musical instinct, he associated sounds with well-known faces and plastic impressions. It was this dual character of musician-poet and musician, the interpreter not only of emotions without form, but of impressions received through the senses, that was to be the distinctive mark of Schumann's genius.

At the age of nine he heard at Karlsbad Moscheles, at that time the leading pianist and one of the most highly esteemed composers in Germany. The impression made upon him was unforgettable. Many years later he was to describe it in enthusiastic terms in a letter to the great musician, who had dedicated a vol-

ume of his pieces to him. It certainly strengthened Schumann's nascent vocation.

At Easter 1820 he entered the fourth class *(quarta)* of the gymnasium at Zwickau, where he was to spend eight years, acquiring a thoroughly solid classical education. None the less, he did not neglect his music. Even as early as this he was not content with the lessons of his master—who was, indeed, a poor one—but felt the necessity for carving his own way. He formed an orchestra of those of his little friends who could play, and conducted from the piano the performance of Righini's *Tigranes* and of compositions by Eichner, Haydn, and Weber. What is more, as he recalls in the autobiographical sketch which he drew up with a view to a doctorate, he composed some choral works with orchestral accompaniment at the age of eleven, and even attempted overtures and operas: in the notebook in which he has left a record of all his works, with the date of their composition, we find, in the year 1822–3, Psalm CV. At the same time he formed an intimate friendship with one of his schoolfellows, young Pilzing, with whom he played arrangements for piano duet of Beethoven symphonies and works by Haydn, Mozart, Weber, Hummel, and Czerny; and in the hospitable house of the Carus family he was fortunate enough to hear good chamber-music. He was greatly beloved by this highly cultivated and artistic family, among whom his sweet temper had won him the nickname of "Fridolin," the incarnation of purity and candour. He took part in the performances organized at the Caruses' house, accompanied choruses, among them Anselm Weber's setting of *Der*

Gang nach dem Eisenhammer, and had to perform the *Alexander Variations* of Moscheles, of which he could already cope with the difficulties successfully.

By this time there could no longer be any doubt of young Schumann's vocation. Though she recognized it, his mother opposed it violently from the first. His father, on the contrary, encouraged it and cherished the plan of entrusting his musical education to Weber, the fêted composer of *Der Freischütz*, and the unchallenged leader of the new romantic school. Negotiations were opened, and Weber consented to take charge of Robert; but, for reasons unknown to us, the plan came to nothing. The worthy bookseller was certainly thinking of sending his son to some other master when he died, just as Robert reached the age of sixteen, at that critical moment of transition from childhood to youth, when he more than ever needed an affectionate and judicious guide.

These years of adolescence, when the lineaments of the future man begin to take shape in the pliable clay of the child, were indeed unusually difficult in Schumann's case. Between the ages of fourteen and sixteen his character underwent a profound modification. His joyous, frank, open nature became melancholy, taciturn, and introspective. He appeared indifferent, inattentive, and indolent, with a curious outward "passivity." He would abandon himself to mystical reveries, which he loved to express by improvising at the piano in the evenings, drawing sobs even from himself.

But though outwardly he seemed passive, and continued to appear so during his whole life, his inner na-

ture was in a constant state of ferment, and, as it were, always a-quiver. From the age of seventeen onwards, we can follow its every fluctuation in the letters which he wrote to his friends—notably to Flechsig, the chosen of his heart, and afterwards to his mother, his sister, and his fiancée.

His activity during these transition years was poetic rather than musical. This is the time at which gifted youths choose from among the poets of the day those who seem to them to express the feelings by which they themselves are agitated, but to which they are as yet incapable of giving a form. Robert turned first to the elegiac poets of the *Göttinger Hainbund*. Next, like all his contemporaries, he exalted his imagination with the vehement and pathetic idealism of Schiller, as so many young Germans of both sexes have continued to do for close on a century and a half. He had a taste for the insipid lyrical effusions of Schulze, which, sad to say, lasted into his manhood. He devoured the crudely fatalistic melodramas of Müllner and Houwald. He intoxicated himself with the satanic romanticism of Byron. He attacked Goethe, though in a letter to Flechsig of October 1, 1827 he admitted that he did not yet understand him. On the other hand, he plunged ardently into classical literature. In the letter to his favourite confidant which we have just quoted, in which he, so to speak, drew up a statement of what books he studied, he noted that he was reading Homer and expected to finish the *Odyssey* by Easter. He had read all Sophocles—in the original, of course—except the *Philoctetes*, and started the *Crito*, but found no pleasure in it and did not understand it.

He was greatly attracted by Tacitus and Sallust, but detested Cicero, whom he stigmatized as a "charlatan," and he did not like Horace, whose libertinism offended him, contrasting him with the "sublime Sarbiewski," the Polish imitator of the *Odes* and *Epistles*. He had a sufficient mastery of Latin to be considered worthy to collaborate in Forcellini's great *Lexicon totius latinitatis* and he added fuel to his cult of the heroic, and found food for his ambitious aspirations, by taking part in the preparation of the *Bildergalerie der berühmten Männer, mit beigefügtem Texte (Gallery of Portraits of Celebrated Men, with explanatory text)*, published by his father. But the great literary event of his adolescence was the discovery of Jean Paul, which he made at the age of seventeen. Nowadays we find it extremely difficult to understand the extraordinary domination exercised over Germany at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries by this extravagant writer, whose enormous, confused novels, devoid of all psychological reality, with their tedious action, their absurd characters, their scenes drawn from some fantastic world, their interminable, involved sentences, in which grotesque jests alternate with ecstatic falterings, fill us with a long and exasperated boredom. And yet, on reflection, we perceive that Jean Paul embodies in a peculiarly significant fashion some of the most precious virtues of the German genius, as well as most of its most obvious blemishes. The incapacity to confine their subject-matter within a precise and lucid form, against which the greatest Germans, such as Goethe, for example, struggled desperately during the whole of their glorious career;

their incapacity for imposing limits and restraints upon themselves; their tendency to lose themselves in the clouds, among the fumes of vague philosophic ideas, the "cult of the trivial"—in short, their lack of taste—in whom are these qualities more obtrusively and offensively present than in Jean Paul? But, on the other hand, is there anyone in whom spiritual innocence and candour of soul gleam more brightly, together with a confused but passionate aspiration towards the tremulous light of the stars of infinite space, and an ardent sympathy for the deep poetry to be found in humble lives and the dreams of simple hearts? And can we not understand why Jean Paul produced such an overwhelming effect on the soul of a musician? For it is the lack of the gift of plastic expression, the fusion of all form in musical emotion, that most strongly characterize the genius of Jean Paul.

And so, the very first time Schumann read these works, the effect on him was startling. But we should note that, before reading a single line of Jean Paul, Robert Schumann was infected with his spirit. As early as 1826 (he did not get to know the author of the *Titan* till a year later), I may point out the following page of Schumann's, about which he was afterwards to say himself that it had a ring of Jean Paul, though at that time he did not know him and had merely divined him: "There are hours in which all the manifestations of our human sensibility tend towards such a plaintive minor chord; in which the feelings of all hardened and repentant sinners—for such we all are —are fused in such melancholy that the tears we shed

are tears of grief rather than of joy. I often ask myself which is the moving moment when the most incongruous shades of joy and sorrow are formed, the most divine scenes of human existence, which must needs be accompanied by the emotions of all because all men share in them—when all human creatures embrace one another with tears of joy in their eyes, when every man believes that he can feel and experience the sublime: 'Come to my embrace, ye millions of living creatures!'—What moment is this?" Undoubtedly, then, there existed an innate affinity between Schumann and Jean Paul, and if he loved the great humorist so passionately, it was because he found in him some of his own deepest and most intimate qualities.

In any case, once Schumann had discovered Jean Paul, this writer acquired an irresistible domination over the whole of his emotional and intellectual life. We can point out innumerable effusions in the manner of his favourite writer, in the youthful letters in which he pours out his overburdened soul, big with vague desires and confused dreams. We should like to quote them all, for it is in these naïve and spontaneous confidences, which are not lacking in a certain desire to aim at literary effect and are, so to speak, offshoots of the lyrical effusions of Jean Paul's heroes, that Robert Schumann lays bare his soul to us. The following is, at any rate, a typical specimen: "I happened to be lying on my sofa," he writes to Flechsig in July 1827, "and gave myself up to my dreams; young spring-tide memories of days gone by danced before my eyes, swollen with tears, and the vanished forms of my loved ones took form in a smiling dream, and when I

awoke I felt my eyes wet with tears and I was holding your letter in my hands. Then all the happy hours that I had lately spent with you, my old friend, appeared once more in my memory, and, in a state of melancholy exaltation, I turned to nature and read and re-read your letter ten times, while the last kiss of crimson lips passed joyfully over the gently dying verdure of the heights, and little huddled clouds massed themselves upon the pure ether. . . . Oh, my Flechsig, only now do I feel it, the pure, supreme love which does not for ever drain the heady chalice of pleasure, but finds its happiness in divine contemplation and adoration; oh, my friend! if I were a smile, I would hover round her eyes; if I were joy, I would throb sweetly in all her pulses; ah! were I but a tear, I would weep with her, and did she but smile again, how gladly would I die with her, how gladly would I cease to be.[1] . . . Like a wide, wide evening landscape, over which the rosy flower of the sinking sun still softly quivers, my whole life lies open before me. Lo! I dream, and I see rising before my eyes, arid and silent, a huge, vast mountain, and on its summit blooms a celestial rose, and I want to seize it, I want to draw near to it, but the mountain is steep and bristles with precipices. And in vain does your friend stretch out his imploring hands towards it; and just because he cannot attain it, he is filled with felicity, and feels himself a god, because it is granted to him to adore the rose from afar and to find in this divine contemplation all the paradise of his lost happiness. . . ."

[1] According to Herr Walter Dahms's fine biography of Schumann (Berlin, 1916), these effusions had as their object Frau Agnes Carus.

Might not this be a page in the *Titan* or *Hesperus*? Are not these the ecstatic falterings of their heroes and heroines? And not only does he reproduce in his still stumbling prose the dawns and twilights of their dreams, but he endeavours to fill his life with their melodious languors. On the altars of his friendships burns the incense distilled by the "mysterious priest" of Bayreuth. And the first girls to arouse his adolescent emotions—good little German girls, no doubt, with pink cheeks and blue eyes—are decked by his imagination with the sickly graces of Jean Paul's ethereal maidens. We know the names of Robert's first two loves. They were called Liddy Hempel and Nanni Patsch. The attentions which the young enthusiast paid to them cannot have been very compromising, for, silent even in his amorous ecstasies, he notes that "he never told his love." On the other hand, he discoursed copiously on the subject to his usual confidant.

During his holiday travels in August 1827, in the course of which he passed through Dresden, Prague, and Teplitz, he ascended the Rosenburg, with Liddy, from the last-mentioned place. "At last, when the sun had sunk and whole spring-tides of blooming roses glowed dimly from its dying rays, when the mountain tops began to blaze and the forests to burn as with fire, and immeasurable creation dissolved into soft rosy masses; and as I gazed into this ocean of crimson, and all, all became condensed into a single thought, and while I grasped the great idea of the Godhead—and Nature, my beloved, and the Godhead stood in ecstasy before me and smiled kindly upon me—lo! as rapid as a flash, a black cloud arose in the east, and more of them arose

and piled themselves up on high, and I seized Liddy's hand and said: 'Oh, Liddy, even so is life!' And I pointed to the dark crimson massed on the horizon and she gazed at me mournfully and a tear stole from her eyelid. Then, Flechsig, I believed that I had once more found the ideal, and silently I plucked a rose—but, as I tried to offer it to her, a thunder-clap and a lightning-flash broke from the east, and I took the rose and scattered its petals—that thunder-clap had awakened me from a lovely dream—I was back again on earth. . . . When I took leave of her, she again pressed my hand violently, and the dream was gone—the dream is gone! And *the lofty image of the ideal fades away, when I think of how she talks of Jean Paul.* Let us leave the dead to their sleep!" (August 29, 1827, to Flechsig). If at the age of seventeen he could not forgive a lack of enthusiasm for his hero in a little girl, if in this same letter he impresses upon Flechsig that he ought to read the *Titan,* under pain of being spurned by him, the following curious incident happened to him at the age of forty: During a visit to Hamburg he coupled the names of Bach and Jean Paul in a toast, as two heroes of the Germanic genius. When Grädener, one of his friends, refused to allow the comparison between the father of German music and the Bayreuth master, Schumann, usually so kindly and courteous, rose up in a rage, stigmatized the contradiction as a piece of insolence, and left the table.

As we see, his enthusiasm for Jean Paul lasted during his whole life. Just as at Hamburg he placed him side by side with Bach, so, in one of his criticisms, he was to place him on the same level as Beethoven, saying

that certain pages of his are the best commentary on the symphonies.[2] Is it surprising that when Schumann definitively decided in favour of music as a profession, Jean Paul exerted the deepest influence over his musical imagination? It is true that this influence was not a direct one, or it was only so, at least, in his very first works. "It is only the first of the *Papillons,*" he writes to Henriette Voigt in 1834, "that attempts to be a translation of Jean Paul. But the whole series was inspired by the last chapter of the *Flegeljahre;* it is all there, down to the giant's boot in F sharp minor." It is not a mere rendering in music of Jean Paul, but a musical transposition, an attempt to translate his portraits and psychological analyses into sounds, that we can trace in Schumann's work. I have laid stress on this elsewhere, in analysing the composer's musical imagination.[3] Here I have merely tried to record the profound impression left upon Schumann by that strange, elegiac humorist, whom one can neither like nor dislike by halves. It has often been believed and alleged, on the strength of the *Davidsbündler* and *Kreisleriana,* that Schumann drew his chief literary inspiration from E. T. A. Hoffmann; and it is true that he borrowed a few of his types from the romantic association which he imagined with the *Kater Murr.* But Hoffman's influence on Schumann was a superficial and a purely external one. It is a curious fact that—if I am not mistaken—Hoffmann's name is not once mentioned either in Schumann's copious correspondence

[2] *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker,* Reclam ed., I, 59.

[3] Cf. Basch, *Schumann,* in the series *Les Maîtres de la musique* (Alcan, Paris, 1926), pp. 70-81.

or in his three volumes of criticism. Nor indeed has the fantastic element in Schumann's music anything of the macabre character of the nightmares conceived by the author of the *Tales* amid the fumes of drink, the melancholy which makes itself felt in all his works, or the purely physical terror which Hoffmann manages to inspire in his readers. As a matter of fact, Jean Paul, and, during his mature years, the harsh and headstrong genius of Hebbel, were the only writers, apart from the Greek, Latin, and German classics, who really produced any effect on Schumann.

But for the moment we are only concerned with his youth. His inborn tendency towards poetry was confirmed by the influence of his impassioned poring over Jean Paul and strove to find expression in his works. He wrote a number of pieces in verse, two novels, and some plays, of which the titles alone have come down to us: *Juniusabende, Selene, Coriolan, Die beiden Montalti,* and lastly *Les Frères Laudendőrfer,* a fatalistic drama in the style of Zacharias Werner and Műllner. Herr Walter Dahms gives us valuable information with regard to the awakening of Robert's literary tendencies. At the age of fifteen he founded with a few friends a society entitled *Einweihung in die deutsche Literatur* (Initiation into German Literature), at which they read and commented upon Schiller, Weisse, Rosengarten, Gleim, Raupach, Schulze, Scott, Byron, and Goethe. In November–December 1823 he started a sort of literary diary, *Blätter und Blümchen aus der goldenen Aue* (Leaves and Flowerets from the Golden Mead), a collection of short poems from the pen of Robert and his parents, notes on musicians,

extracts from "Ideas for an Æsthetic of Music," besides a scene of a tragedy, *Der Geist*. Between 1825 and 1828 he produced a collection entitled *Allerley aus der Feder Roberts an der Mulde* (Miscellanea from the pen of R . . .), containing poems which, like the conclusion of an "Essay on the intimate connexion between poetry and music *(Uber die innige Verwandtschaft der Poesie und Tonkunst)*, closely recall the ideas in Schiller's *Die Künstler*.

But once again chance led him back to music. Dr. Carus's young wife, who had a fine voice and was an excellent musician, introduced him to the treasures of German song and above all revealed to him the musician who was to vie with Jean Paul as the chief object of his admiration and in whom he saw—in my opinion wrongly—the musical counterpart of that writer: Franz Schubert. As a matter of fact, nothing could be more dissimilar than the candour, freshness, and inexhaustible spontaneity of the Viennese genius and the involved, over-ornate, composite, and laboriously unspontaneous talent of Jean Paul. Moreover, there is no evidence to justify the assertion that Schubert produced the same overwhelming impression on him as Jean Paul. The pages overflowing with enthusiasm that he devotes to Schubert belong to a later date than the years 1827–8, which we have now reached; but we know that this was the time when he began studying the vocal music of Schubert and Mendelssohn, and himself composed a few *Lieder* to words by Byron, Schulze, or himself. Having thus been drawn back into the path of music, he started on a piano concerto in E minor and at the same time projected a treatise

on the æsthetic of music. At this moment, as at so many others during his youth, he felt the genius of music and that of poetry stirring in him with almost equal force. "I possess imagination," he writes. "I am not a profound thinker. Whether I *am* a poet—for I cannot *become* one—posterity must decide. The strange thing is that where my feelings make themselves felt most strongly, I am forced to cease being a poet: at such times I can never arrive at adequate ideas." Schumann was unaware that this impotence which he records was the very sign of his musical vocation.

And now his school-life was about to close: by 1828 he had completed the cycle of his classical studies and was on the point of leaving the gymnasium and his parents' house. Herr Dahms provides the following information on Schumann's last few years at school: it was above all in the first (highest) class that he displayed ability which attracted the attention of two of his masters, the Rector (J. Hertel) and K. E. Richter, under whose influence he fell. Herr Dahms enumerates some of his essays, *Über die Zufälligkeit und Nichtigkeit des Nachruhms* (On the Precarious and Worthless Character of Posthumous Fame), and *Einfluss der Einsamkeit auf die Bildung des Geistes und die Veredelung des Herzens* (The Influence of Solitude in Forming the Mind and Ennobling the Heart), which show evidence of remarkable maturity of mind and delicacy of soul. Robert also distinguished himself during an examination conducted in 1828 by Canon Dr. Tillmann and had to make the speech which was

the culminating point of a solemn torchlight procession organized on this occasion.

On casting a last glance at Schumann's early youth we are forced to conclude that it was happy and normal. The melancholy upon which we have remarked was not necessarily a morbid phenomenon; it was to a large extent literary, and might be observed in most of the young men of this period, who, in spite of imitating Werther and Jean Paul at the age of eighteen, none the less became excellent bourgeois later in life, and even hardened Philistines. No definite symptoms had as yet appeared of the mental derangement which affected Schumann and led to his death. His poetical effusions did not in the least prevent him from enjoying to the full the pleasures of his age, which his parents' easy circumstances enabled them to offer him liberally. He visited Saxony and Bohemia and made excursions with his school-friends in the neighbourhood of Zwickau, the lively incidents of which are related in his letters to Flechsig: they danced with the miller's daughter (was this a reminiscence of Schubert's *Müllerlieder*?), gave a concert to the peasants, and came home uplifted in spirits and a little "unsteady in gait, *wankend und schwankend*" (December 1, 1827, to Flechsig). All this points to a healthy constitution and a normal mental state. The sorrows which we shall have to relate ought not to cast their shadow over the years during which the human plant whose development we are studying unfolded itself in perfect security, unconscious of the storms that were to wither its beauty and stunt its growth.

Years of Apprenticeship
(April 1828–October 1830)
Leipzig and Heidelberg

I. Leipzig

ON LEAVING THE GYMNASIUM YOUNG ROBERT HAD next to choose the career in which he would be able to develop the talents with which Nature had so richly endowed him. Was he already sure, at this early age, that his gift for music took precedence of all the rest? We do not know. It is possible that the young man's mother and guardian took advantage of the twofold tendency which we have noted in him, towards both music and poetry, between which he could not succeed in arriving at a decision, to influence him in favour of the study of law, in which the middle classes have always seen the surest road to an honourable and lucrative career. The fact remains that we find no trace in Schumann's confidences to his friends of any revolt against his mother's decision. We may imagine that, while feeling some melancholy at leaving his little native town, the family to whom he was so tenderly attached, and the old house of which the very life and soul, in his eyes, was the grand piano for which he was afterwards to sigh at Leipzig, he was not at all sorry to live that student life which, in Germany more than elsewhere, forms a period full of gaiety and tumultuous excitement between the games of childhood and the serious tasks of manhood.

Leipzig, a few hours away from Zwickau, was naturally chosen as his university town. But Robert obtained permission to reach it by devious ways, passing through southern Germany, towards which his artist's temperament felt naturally attracted. He started off with a friend, Gisbert Rosen, and struck out straight for Bayreuth, the real goal of his journey, for it was here that his beloved Jean Paul had lived. Among the memories of his master, he lived in a state of rapture, he wrote to his brother; he saw the famous Rollwentzel, who had been the great humorist's factotum for twenty-six years, and was received by the deceased writer's widow, who presented him with a portrait of her husband. He next made a short and happy stay at Nuremberg, reviving the memory of that mediæval Germany which romanticism had brought back into fashion; at Augsburg, where he managed to fall in love with the daughter of Dr. von Kurrer, a friend of his family—who was, moreover, already engaged—and at Munich, where he made the acquaintance of Heinrich Heine and the painter Zimmermann; after which he parted with Rosen, who went on to Heidelberg, and himself returned to Leipzig by way of Zwickau.

The first impressions of the young provincial, abruptly transplanted from the little country town where he had been brought up to a great commercial and industrial city, were very melancholy. On his journey, in spite of the joys of wandering about the world, free and exempt from care, like the heroes of Tieck's and Eichendorff's romances, he had already felt homesick longing for the family hearth, and es-

pecially for his mother. "I have often wounded you," he writes to her from Nuremberg on April 28, 1828, "I have often misunderstood your intentions when all you desired was my good. Forgive the vehement, turbulent young man his faults, for which he intends to make amends by good and noble actions and a virtuous life. . . . May you be a good, forgiving mother to me, a merciful judge of my youthful mistakes, admonishing me kindly when I am too impetuous."

These tender feelings persisted and grew stronger at Leipzig. He complained most of all of the dullness and lack of charm of the city scenes to which he was suddenly transplanted. The intimate, unspoilt nature to which he was accustomed was not to be found there. Everything was elaborated and complicated by the hand of man. "I find neither valley, mountain, nor forest where I can abandon myself entirely to my thoughts, no place but my own bolted room where I can be alone with myself, while below in the street all is stir and tumult." And to this feeling of strangeness and solitude is added a more intimate and deeper suffering. He now ventures to write to his mother what he had doubtless been unwilling to say to her by word of mouth before his departure: "What tortures me is the eternal inward struggle with regard to the choice of my studies. I cannot like this cold jurisprudence, which crushes you in its definitions from the very first. I cannot study medicine; I cannot study theology. . . . I cannot do otherwise. I am bound to attack law, however cold and dry it may be; I mean to overcome it, and if a man only has the will, he can do anything. But philosophy and history must be one of my chief

studies. . . . Tell everybody that I am longing to be back at Zwickau just as I used to long for Leipzig: such is man, and I am one" (May 21, 1828, to his mother).

He tried, however, to get the better of his feelings. Moreover, he found at Leipzig his old friend and faithful confidant Flechsig, and Semmel, the brother of his sister-in-law Therese, whose society he frequented assiduously. He and Semmel joined a students' corps, but left it before long and became affiliated to another, the Marcomannia, though the absurd swaggering chauvinism of his companions soon disgusted him. He practised fencing and asked permission to take riding-lessons. He affected to go through his legal studies quite mechanically, but hardly attended any lectures, and became more and more confirmed in his antipathy to the law. As a matter of fact, he did nothing but make music. But while doing so, he was filled with remorse at not keeping his word; and this was one of the first causes of that dissatisfaction which he felt with himself and the world in general and poured out at length in his letters to his mother. All the same, this is not enough to explain the young student's pessimism and hypochondria. It was during this first stay at Leipzig that signs of an unstable humour appeared in him, a taste for tears and a tendency towards melancholy, which were no doubt partly due to imitating Jean Paul's heroes, but—to use a stilted phrase—were none the less sincere, and indicative of morbid tendencies. "I dreamed of you last night," he wrote to his mother on August 22, 1828, "and I awoke with tears in my eyes. . . . I have never felt happy or at home

in Leipzig and I am often tortured by the pettiness of life and pitiful mankind. . . . If I had only somebody who really understood me and did everything to please me out of love for me! I get on very well with Flechsig, *but he never cheers me up. When I am melancholy (trübsinnig), he ought not to be so too and he ought to have enough human feeling to stimulate me.* I feel quite well that I need somebody to cheer me." And again, on August 31, he writes in the same strain: "My life is monotonous and joyless: it is fortunate that I am not living alone: *I should easily become melancholy (trübsinnig).* It does not amuse me much to walk about the streets, and it often disgusts me to see stupid people. Yet in my heart I am not joyless: for what men cannot give me is given me by music, and my piano says for me all the lofty emotions which I cannot express. . . . I have excessively tender sensibilities, I know, and every man who feels deeply is bound to be unhappy."

And it was music, indeed, "the voice of his piano," that led him out of this first attack of melancholy. And once more it was Dr. Carus, now appointed a professor at the University of Leipzig, and his wife, Agnes, the "*Liedersängerin*" (songstress), as he calls her, of Zwickau, who were the occasion of his return to music. As soon as he arrived in Leipzig he had, indeed, hired a piano and practised regularly for two hours a day. But this practising, without master or guide, could not take him very far. It was at this point that he made the acquaintance, at the Caruses' house, of a man who, for better or for worse, was to have a profound influence on his life and exert a tyrannical

domination over his somewhat weak nature for years on end; to whom, moreover, he owed the greatest joys and the most painful moments in his life: Friedrich Wieck, the father of his future wife, Clara.

Friedrich Wieck was born in 1795 at Pretzsch, near Wittenberg, and had first studied theology; he next became a tutor and afterwards opened a piano- and music-shop at Leipzig. It was not till comparatively late in life that he decided to give piano lessons, but he rapidly became one of the most sought-after teachers in Germany. He had adopted Logier's system, which consisted in dealing with stiffness of the fingers, and acquiring a good position of the arms and the whole body, by means of "chiroplasts." He therefore attached great importance to pianistic technique. But, as he has declared, both in a serious and in a humorous form, in his books, *Klavier und Gesang* and *Musikalische Bauersprüche,* technique ought to be only a means and should never become an end in itself. The art of piano-playing should have as its essential aim to arrive at a thorough understanding of a given piece and interpret it according to the composer's own intentions. Naturally, with this severe conception of the pianist's art, he judged at their true value the works or trifles aiming at mere virtuosity of such composers as Heinrich Herz, Thalberg, Kalkbrenner, and Hűnten and had a perfect cult of classical music. He had a curiously passionate nature and an extraordinarily fiery temperament, capable of self-abnegation and disinterestedness when his art, and what he considered its imperative interests, were in question; but, on the other hand, he was full of unaccountable

inconsistencies and a morbid pride; he was singularly grasping and indulged in such extravagant conduct that, especially in his behaviour to Schumann and his daughter, he seems positively deranged. At the time when Robert made the father's acquaintance, the daughter was nine years old and so was no more than a gay, laughing child. But Wieck had been quick to recognize her exceptional musical gifts and subjected her to such methodical and intensive training that as early as October 20, 1828 she was able to play Kalkbrenner's *Variations* at the Gewandhaus with triumphant success and by the age of eleven was already making her first concert tour. Fraternal relations soon sprang up between little Clara and Schumann, who came to live with his master in order to be nearer to him.

For so soon as he had an idea of what Wieck was, and realized his capacity, he asked him for some lessons, and it was not till now—that is to say, at the age of eighteen—that he really began his musical studies. These studies, it is important to note, were mainly pianistic. Schumann had a violent dislike for musical theory. He considered that a close study of the masters ought to make him familiar with their methods and spare him the arid study of harmony, counterpoint, and composition. And so, side by side with the technical studies given him by Wieck, which, in addition to exercises strictly so called, included the works of Hummel, Field, Moscheles, and Berger, he devoted himself with absolute passion to reading music, especially that of Bach and Schubert. He formed friendships with a number of young musicians: Julius

Knorr, afterwards a professor of the piano at Leipzig and a contributor to Schumann's review; Täglichsbeck, a violinist, afterwards a grammar-school *(Gymnasium)* master and director of music at Brandenburg; Glock, a violoncellist, afterwards burgomaster of Ostheim, and lastly Sörgel, a viola-player. He played piano duets and concerted music with them and learnt to know the classical trios and quartets, especially the quartets of Beethoven. But it was Bach, whom he regarded during his whole life as the father of German music and as being, with Beethoven, the most comprehensive musical genius—though Schubert seemed to him the most charming—who at this time engrossed the largest share of his attention; and his "bedside book" was the *Wohltemperirtes Klavier*. The study of these masters quite naturally prompted him to creative work. He composed eight polonaises for piano duet and a quartet for piano and strings, and sent a few songs to A. G. Wiedebein of Brunswick (whose melodies were very popular at the time and are not lacking in a certain nobility), accompanying them by two most interesting letters (July 15 and August 5, 1828). "The poems of Kerner," he writes, "which attracted me most by that mysterious and more than earthly power which one often finds in the poetry of Goethe and Jean Paul, first suggested to me the idea of essaying my feeble powers, for in these poems every word is a music of the spheres which can only be fixed by a note." He admits that he has no knowledge either of harmony, thorough-bass, or counterpoint, but consoles himself by the reflection that "the harsh paws of

the lion of reason must not crush the tender hands of the lyric Muse of music."

Schumann had now started on the right path. He had a remarkable teacher and sympathetic surroundings and was in the city with the richest and most flourishing musical life in Germany; he had overcome his unsociability and taste for melancholy solitude and he frequented the splendid Gewandhaus concerts, went into society, and even went to the University, where he attended lectures, if not in law, at least in philosophy, his professor being Krug, who inspired him to study Fichte and Kant; while he did not scorn to indulge in the distractions, and even the excesses, of young men of his age.

And this was the moment at which he chose to leave Leipzig for Heidelberg. After spending the holidays at Zwickau and writing to thank his mother for being so good to him—adding that his happiness would have been perfect *if she had only been more cheerful at times*, he returned in the best of spirits to Leipzig, where, he said, he now felt "quite at home." But his contentment did not last. On the one hand, he simply could not do without the natural beauties in which Leipzig was so poor; on the other hand, he perhaps felt at this time that need for change of scene and surroundings which we shall remark many times in his life, and which is a sign of a certain psychical instability. Moreover—and this is perhaps the chief reason—misunderstandings had arisen between him and his master, echoes of which we find in the famous letter of August 9, in which Wieck advises Schumann's mother to allow her son to devote himself entirely to

music. We learn from it that, in spite of all his admiration and respect for Wieck, Robert found it hard to submit to the iron discipline which the master imposed on his pupils: accustomed as he was to follow his own inspiration, he was doubtless not sorry to recover his full liberty for a time. "When in the lessons I was giving him," writes the severe pedagogue, "I succeeded, after hard struggles, stubborn resistance, and the abominable tricks that his unbridled imagination played us both, in convincing him of the importance of a pure, accurate, even style of playing, elegant and strongly rhythmical, it often produced but little result at the following lesson. And if, with my accustomed affection for him, I once more took up the old theme . . . he would make excuses for non-attendance for a week to a fortnight or more, and continued these excuses . . . up to the day when he started out for Heidelberg, to form connexions which were really not calculated to put any restraint upon such an unruly imagination, combined with such an unstable mind." And lastly, a letter of April 31 to his friend Rosen, dated from Schneeberg, near Zwickau, where he was spending the holidays, alludes to a love-affair which had started at the end of his stay in Leipzig. Schumann's letters, even those written to the most intimate of his youthful friends, are silent with regard to the young man's love-experiences. Possibly this is because his correspondence was edited and expurgated by Clara, but also, perhaps, because the young poet-musician's delicacy and reserve were repelled by all low and facile love-adventures. The following are the terms in which he expresses himself with regard to an

intrigue which he cannot have carried very far: "It was difficult for me to leave Leipzig, a beautiful feminine soul, gay and pious, had enchained my own."

Whatever may have been the reason for his departure, he made up his mind to it, and, on the pretext that the leading professors of the jurisprudence which he had neglected in such princely fashion, Thibaut and Mittermayer, were at Heidelberg, he obtained his mother's permission to spend two terms in the "city of the Muses on the Neckar," famous among all the university towns of Germany for the beauty of its situation, the amiability of its inhabitants, and the gaiety of its life, and to which he had been called by Gisbert Rosen, one of his dearest friends, who awaited him there. He made his way there by easy stages in glorious May weather, met Willibald Alexis, the future novelist, on the way, and struck up an intimate friendship with him, spending a short time with him at Frankfurt. The joyous animation of the great city enchanted him and chased away his gloomy mood. He naturally visited, with respectful emotion, the house where Goethe was born, was enthusiastic about Dannecker's Ariadne, visited Georg Dűring, counsellor of legation, and was suddenly seized with such an irresistible and frenzied desire to play the piano that he went into a piano-shop, represented himself as the tutor of an English lord commissioned to buy a piano, and played to his heart's content. He next went to Wiesbaden, where his gaiety was so irrepressible that it amused all his travelling-companions; and, lastly, he made the classic journey along the banks of the Rhine, duly enjoying the famous landscape and filled with

enthusiasm by the great river, which appeared to him "tranquil, silent, grave, and proud, like an old German god"; all the same, he ended by growing tired of the everlasting castles, preferring to admire the "Greek" noses and blooming complexions of the pretty girls of the Rhineland, visited Bingen, Coblenz —where he objected to the stiff *(ledernen,* leathern) Prussian soldiers—Mainz, and Worms, and at last arrived at Heidelberg, refreshed and strengthened by his travels.

II. Heidelberg

The first impressions which Schumann obtained of the exquisite little town where he stayed from the spring of 1827 to the autumn of 1830 were excellent. He became acclimatized there more quickly than at Leipzig and wrote to his mother that he felt "gay and sometimes happy" there (July 17, 1829). He was enthusiastic—or, at least, said that he was—over the teaching of Thibaut and Mittermayer, who revealed "the true dignity of jurisprudence" to him, and the former of whom, in particular, seemed to him "overflowing with life and wit" by comparison with the "automatons of Leipzig." The life was agreeable, the students were refined, coldly ceremonious, and more sober than those of Leipzig. He enjoyed dreaming on the banks of the Neckar, whose soft curves seemed to him to have something feminine about them, as compared with the "virile beauty" of the Rhine, and he made merry excursions to Baden-Baden, Mannheim, and Worms, during which his "money melted away." He assiduously frequented the society of Rosen and

Semmel and made friends with some East Prussians, some Englishmen, and a Greek. He eagerly studied French, which he learnt to speak fluently, and Italian, in preparation for the journey which he projected making to that land of beauty.

And this journey really took place. He persuaded his mother that, if there are three months' holidays at the University, it is to enable the students to go to Switzerland and Italy. "This costs money, it is true," he writes, but the pilgrimage to Italy, which had become classic since that of Goethe, was an old dream of his, and since the opportunity offered, he did not intend to let it escape.

And so he started out at the end of August, passed through Basel, Baden, Zűrich, and Zug, from whence he wrote his mother, in heartfelt words: "Man is not so unhappy as he imagines," ascended the Rigi, arrived at Berne on the 31st, and then went on to Milan and Venice, which he was obliged to leave for lack of money, without being able to go any farther.

As might have been foreseen, Italy made a profound impression upon Schumann's artist soul. He enjoyed at the same time the splendours of a land favoured by Nature—a smiling and, as it were, humanized Nature—and the masterpieces produced in such profusion by the genius of her children. He chronicled the events of his tour in the dithyrambic letters which he wrote to his sister-in-law Therese and to Wieck. He went to the Scala, and the enchantments of Italian music, light, graceful, and melodious, were revealed to him by Rossini and above all by Pasta. In the concert-halls of Leipzig the genius of music had

made him thrill and tremble; in Italy he learnt to love it. "It seemed to me," he writes, "as though God were before me and allowed me for a few moments to gaze upon His face." He even had a love-adventure in that classic land of love, of the transcendental kind with which we are familiar in him. He met a lovely Englishwoman at Milan, who caused him to spend six days there instead of two, and who, he said modestly, seemed to be in love not so much with him as with his playing. And he told Rosen that she was "proud and amiable, full of love and hate, hard, but so tender when I played," and that by way of farewell she had given him a cypress-leaf.

By October he was back again at Heidelberg, animated and refreshed, as always, by his travels. And, as always, this joyous exaltation led him back to music.

Music was loved at Heidelberg, but was not cultivated there by any means to the same extent as at Leipzig. There was not a single pianist of genius in the whole town, and as soon as people had an opportunity of hearing Schumann, especially in those improvisations in which he excelled and which aroused an unforgettable emotion in all those who had occasion to applaud him, they were not slow to vie with one another in entertaining him, so that he was not far from becoming the lion of the place as a pianist. He wrote to his mother, on December 4, 1829, that he had figured as the chief soloist at a grand concert, playing the *Alexander Variations* with such success as to carry away the whole audience, and that the Grand Duchess Stephanie of Baden, who was present, had invited him to play at Mannheim. He was a regular guest every

Friday at the classical concerts arranged by his master Thibaut, who was not only the greatest jurist of his day, but also a musical enthusiast and a remarkable writer on music, whose bearing at a performance of a Haydn oratorio, and the kindly welcome which he gave Schumann, touched the latter so much that he asked himself how "a poor clod *(Lump)* like him had the honour to find himself in such a sacred house." His talent as a pianist threw open to him not only Thibaut's house, but those of the first families of Heidelberg. Almost every evening he was at a party or a ball and he regularly spent his Saturdays in the Grand Duchess Stephanie's apartments. He went on learning French, which he did not want to give up till he could read and write it perfectly, and Italian, which he studied with a friend from Trieste, who introduced him to Ariosto and Petrarch. All this could not fail to make serious inroads on his purse. He economized on food in order to pay his language-teachers, and, as early as November, foresaw with some depression that he would leave Heidelberg a hundred thalers in debt.

Amidst this tumultuous and dissipated life, which seems so far removed from his rather unsociable and solitary habits, he did not neglect to find time for quiet meditation and to indulge in that self-analysis to which temperaments of his kind are so prone to abandon themselves. In order to give his mother a picture of his psychological state, he borrowed the following passage from Jean Paul: "There are a few valiant natures standing on the border-line between genius and talent, equipped half for the life of action, half for that of ideas, and withal ardently ambitious. They feel

powerfully all that is beautiful and great, and desire to re-create it again out of themselves, but their success is feeble. They are now poets, now musicians, now painters, and in their youth they give the preference to physical bravery, because at that period force is most readily and easily expressed by the muscles. Thus everything great that they see in their early days, enchants them, because they hope to reproduce it in their own creative work, but later it depresses them, because they are incapable of doing so. They ought, however, to perceive that, provided they succeed in turning their ambition in the right direction in good time, it is they who have drawn a lucky number, in the shape of their manifold and harmonious powers; they seem destined as much for the enjoyment of all that is beautiful as for their own moral development and consciousness of their own being—destined, in fact, to become complete human beings" (December 4, 1829, to his mother).

"Now they are poets, now musicians, now painters": it is the old antagonism reviving once more, for which he finds a formula in Jean Paul, applying it to himself. And yet by this time he understood himself thoroughly and had made his choice. After a tour in Switzerland and to the Lake of Constance, he indeed writes to his mother (November 11): "It is all over with piano-playing for me; I play seldom and badly, the torch of the splendid genius of music is gently dying out, and all my musical activity appears to me like a glorious dream which once existed, but of which all I can vaguely remember is merely that it did exist. And yet, believe me, if ever I were to have achieved anything

in the world, it would have been in music. From the first I have had within me a powerful inclination towards music, and, not to overrate myself, the creative spirit as well. But, alas, the study of law, by which I must earn my bread, so distorts and freezes me that no flowers of the imagination will yearn towards the springtime of the world any more." But this promise to renounce music was not sincere and was no doubt intended to quiet his mother's apprehensions.

And indeed, five days previously, on November 6, a long letter to Friedrich Wieck shows him entirely absorbed in music. First of all he expresses bitter regret at having left Leipzig, where the "Olympus of music" was open to him, and where Wieck was the "priest who raised the veil from the neophyte's eyes at once gently and firmly." Music, he says, is loved at Heidelberg, but talent is lacking. He has improvised for the most part, read but little, and started several symphonies, which he has not finished. He has just finished working at Hummel's Concerto in A minor and can notice neither progress nor loss of ground in his playing; his touch is richer in *forte* passages, and more flexible in *piano* ones, he has more fire, but perhaps less accuracy. Schubert still remains to him the "one and only Schubert," all the more so since he has everything in common with his "one and only" Jean Paul. He had recently played Schubert's Rondo for piano duet, op. 107. "What can be compared to this atmosphere, still and heavy with storm, to this dreary, oppressive lyrical madness, to all the deep, soft, ethereal melancholy which hovers over the whole piece?" He asks Wieck to send him the concertos of Moscheles

and Hummel, Schubert's waltzes, all Schubert's compositions subsequent to op. 100, especially the quintets, besides a few works of Heinrich Herz and Czerny. Everyone will agree that this is hardly the state of mind of one who regards his musical activity as "a faded dream."

On the contrary, during the year which he had just spent at Heidelberg, we have seen him emerge from his solitude and appear before the public, from whom he met with a decidedly favourable reception. He had begun composing again, started a symphony and written Nos. 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8 of *Papillons,* the *Toccata,* and the *Variations on the name Abegg,* inspired by Meta Abegg, the daughter of a high official in Mannheim, to whom one of his friends was paying his court. He had, moreover, been deeply stirred by the extraordinary virtuosity of Paganini, whom he had gone to hear at Frankfurt during the Easter holidays (1830). And he himself, he felt, was also sealed with the divine seal. His dreams for the future were not an illusion. He gained confidence in himself, and, stimulated by the applause with which an artist cannot dispense, he at last ventured to confide to his mother his now quite settled desire to give up the study of law—which he had, moreover, never pursued—and devote himself wholly to music. This was the famous letter of July 30, 1830.

"My whole life," he wrote, "has been a long struggle between poetry and prose, between music and law. Practical life seemed to me an ideal as lofty as art. The ideal was practical activity and the hope of having to cope with a wide sphere of activity. But what pros-

pects are open in Saxony to one who is not of noble birth, who has neither high influence nor fortune and has no real love for beggarly legal practice and two-penny-halfpenny squabbles *(Pfennigstreitigkeiten)*? At Leipzig I dreamt, lived, and lounged without worrying about any plan of life, and essentially I achieved nothing. At Heidelberg I have worked more, but both there and here I have become more and more deeply attached to art. Now I am at the cross-roads and shrink in alarm at the question: Which way am I to turn? If I follow my inward monitor, it points to the path of art, and I believe that is the right path. In reality—do not be angry with me for saying this, as I do in all affection and tenderness—it always seemed to me that you were recommending me the course to which you were prompted by good, maternal reasons which I quite understood, and which we both called 'the insecure future and the uncertainty of earning a livelihood.' But what is to be done now? There is no more torturing thought for a man than that of an unhappy and sterile future which he has prepared for himself. To choose a career quite opposed to one's early bringing-up and vocation is not easy and calls for perseverance, confidence, and rapid training. I still possess all my youthfulness of imagination, which art can still further nurture and ennoble. I have also arrived at the conviction that with work, patience, and a good master I shall be able within six years to rival any pianist, since the whole of piano-playing consists in mere technique and virtuosity. Besides this I also possess imagination, and perhaps talent for individual creative work. The question now arises of

choosing one or the other course, for one alone can stand for something true and great in life. . . . In this struggle I am more ardent than ever, now rash and confident in my strength, now full of anguish when I think what progress I might have made by now and how far I have still to go. . . . As for Thibaut, he has long advised me to decide in favour of art. If I decide in favour of the law, I shall have to stay here for another year to hear his lectures on the Pandects; if I decide in favour of music, I shall have to go to Leipzig. Wieck, in whom I have entire confidence, who knows me and is able to judge of all my powers, must then undertake my further training. Next I should have to spend a year in Vienna, and, if possible, go on to Moscheles. Write to Wieck yourself and ask him what he thinks of me and my plans. I beg for a speedy answer and decision."

At last the question of Schumann's future was raised in the right way. Johanna Schumann, moved to the depths by her son's great cry of distress, understood that this time she would have to give way, and she wrote to Wieck. His answer, dated August 9, 1830, of which I have already had occasion to quote a passage, was favourable, but not without reservations. "Above all, Robert must leave Heidelberg, the ardent city which will still further inflame his imagination, and return to our cold, dull Leipzig. . . . For my part, in view of Robert's talent and imagination, I undertake . . . to make him one of the greatest living pianists, with more intellect and warmth than Moscheles, and on a grander scale than Hummel. . . . Robert is wrong in thinking that the whole art of the

piano lies in mere technique. . . . But it is true that, for him, the greatest difficulty lies in the quiet, cold, thoughtful, and tenacious mastering of technique. . . . Will he in future be more reasonable, firmer, stronger, and, if I may say so, cooler and more manly? His letters do not seem to hold out a prospect of this. . . . And so I only consent to take charge of Robert on the express condition that he takes an hour's lesson from me nearly every day for a year. My business and Clara's tours force me to be absent for periods of three or four weeks at a time. How will Robert behave during these absences? Robert alone can tell. He alone can say if his will will be strong enough. . . . He must clearly understand that, unless a pianist is a very famous composer, he can only earn his living by giving lessons. . . . Will Robert make up his mind to give lessons even now, for one has to train oneself to do so for years? Similarly, can he make up his mind to study dry, cold theory with Wernlich for two years? It is my custom to combine the theory of chords with my teaching of the piano. . . . While he was taking lessons from me, Robert would not consent to learn even the small amount of theory that the interest of the lessons ought to have made acceptable. . . . Will he be ready now to work, as Clara does, for several hours a day at three- and four-part compositions, a labour in which the imagination—or at least an imagination such as that of Robert—must be entirely silent? If Robert has the courage and the strength to answer these questions triumphantly, let his mother give him her blessing. Otherwise, no harm has been done." Weary of opposition, and by no means

insensible to the brilliant future of which Wieck held out a prospect for her child, Frau Schumann consented to try the experiment.

We may imagine Schumann's transports of joy: "What a splendid day was August 19, the day on which I received your letter! If I question my heart—together with my head, my feelings, my understanding, the past, the present, the future, my strength, my hopes, my prospects—everything has pointed the way to art since my earliest childhood. Think of the lofty mind of our dear father, who intended me for art and music! Truly, my dear ones, both you and I may now look the future in the face more confidently and firmly than before" (August 22, to his mother). And to Wieck he wrote: "I remain true to art, I mean to remain true to it, I can and I must. Believe me, I am modest, and I have, indeed, many reasons to be so; but I am also full of courage, patient, confident, and teachable. I have full confidence in you and I give myself entirely into your hands; take me, such as I am, and be patient with me in everything. No criticism shall dishearten me, and no praise shall make me lazy. I wish that you could see right into me now: all is silent within, and over the whole world breathes a light, bright morning air. Have confidence in me, then; I mean to be worthy of the name of your pupil. . . ."

On September 24, Schumann left Heidelberg, and, after an escapade at Strasbourg, where he had wanted to study in a French town the effects of the July Revolution, which he had hailed with enthusiasm, he travelled by way of Mainz, Cologne, and Wesel to Leipzig, there to begin his new life.

The New Life

Schumann as Musician and Literary Critic.—The Davidsbündler.—The *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*.—Schumann's Critical Work.—An Abortive Love-affair: Ernestine von Fricken

(Leipzig, 1830–5)

AT LAST SCHUMANN WAS "AT LIBERTY" AND COULD abandon himself unreservedly to those musical promptings which he had recognized, after some hesitation, to be the most intimate expression of his genius. He had once more found the master in whom he had entire confidence, and who, for his part, had faith in Schumann's talent. It seemed as though he had nothing left to ask of Fate; that he was about to enter with alacrity and, in future, without any obstacle upon the path which lay open before him; and his heart must have been singing, in the words of Heinrich Heine, which he was afterwards to set to music: "*Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen* (The sound of fluting and fiddling is heard). . . ."

Yet this was not the case. With his heavy, unadaptable nature, inclined to glorify the past rather than to see the future in the most favourable light, he found it difficult, in the first place, to get used to the life of Leipzig again. "I feel discontented and restless," he wrote to his mother on October 23. He thanked her for the affection shown in her letters and asked her

"always to be gentle with him." He promised to observe punctiliously her admonitions on the subject of economy, and the restrictions which she considered necessary, only begging her to let him burn two candles every evening, and he confessed piteously that he had no money to get his hair cut. For the moment, he wrote, he could not make up his mind to go into society: he could not help giving way to his mood of disgust and "misanthropic indifferentism"; he often felt "dried up," insensible, and disagreeable, and if he laughed, it was only internally. "Nothing is left of my old ardour and enthusiasm but ashes."

Gradually, however, his spirits became brighter and he recovered his joy in life and work. As early as December 10 he announced that he was not getting on badly, and that "the day before yesterday" he had fallen madly in love. "God grant," he added jocularly, "that my ideal has a fortune of 50,000 thalers." We do not know who the person in question was. What we do know, and what is more important, is that he started out energetically upon the career of a professional pianist, for which he believed himself to be destined. According to the accounts of those who heard him at this time, he possessed a remarkable facility of execution, and a gift for interpreting the character of music, which he displayed in certain brilliant pieces, such as Weber's *Invitation to the Waltz*. At the same time he revised the compositions which he had brought from Heidelberg, and, after correcting and finishing them, included definitively among his works the *Papillons* (op. 2), the *Variations on the name Abegg* (op. 1), and the *Toccata* (op. 7); he even de-

voted his energies to a grand opera, of which he gave his mother an account in a letter of December 12: "I am all on fire and rave all day in sweet, wondrous music. My opera is called *Hamlet*, and the thought of fame and immortality gives me strength." And he discloses to his gentle confidante his intention of going to Hummel at Weimar, so as to be able to call himself the pupil of that celebrated master. His mother was to leave Zwickau and set up house with him in the city of the Muses, made famous by so many great memories. Frau Schumann allowed herself to be carried away by her son's enthusiasm and, though she had long opposed his vocation, pronounced a magnificent panegyric on music. "Music is your faithful mistress, your faithful friend in suffering and joy. What gentle, soothing consolation is given us by music! Be true to her, then, since you have chosen her as the companion of your earthly pilgrimage!"

This fine scheme, so lovingly cherished by the son, and adopted by the mother, came into conflict with the easily excited jealousy of Wieck: when Robert approached him on the subject, he took offence and asked whether he himself were not the leading professor of the piano in Germany. In any case, Robert bore his master no malice, but wrote to his mother: "You can have no idea of his fire, his judgment, or his artistic standpoint, but when his interest or that of Clara is in question, he becomes as savage as any boor." The future was to prove the accuracy of Schumann's judgment of Wieck only too well. At any rate, it was not long before he formed another plan. He was obviously going through one of those periods of happy excitement

which so abruptly succeeded his moments of depression. "I am working hard and making splendid progress; in from three to four years I hope to have got as far as Moscheles has done. . . . With patience and perseverance I can do great things if I choose; but I often lack self-confidence before the world, though at the same time I can be very proud inwardly. God grant that I may continue to be thoroughly strong, modest, steady, and sober. The flame that is naturally pure is always the finest and gives the most heat. If only my talent for poetry and music were concentrated upon *one* point, the light would not be so broken and I could venture upon many things." So Schumann was quite reconciled to his life in Leipzig; he was facing the future confidently, and bravely enduring the privations to which he was obliged to subject himself: he lived chiefly on potatoes, and ate meat only twice a week.

But suddenly Fate, which at this moment was showing Schumann none but a smiling face, took a gloomy turn. In the effort to attain to the highest pitch of virtuosity as soon as possible, he strained the fourth finger of his right hand by adopting an irrational method, which caused it to become paralysed. In vain did he try every sort of treatment, even of the most fantastic kind, in order to avert the catastrophe. They all failed, and Schumann had to resign himself to renouncing the career of a professional pianist for good and consider himself fortunate to be able to use his hand again little by little, to play to a few friends and, above all, to himself. Our hero seems to have borne this cruel collapse of all his plans for the future better

than might have been expected in view of his morbid sensibility. Perhaps he had a presentiment that the career of a professional pianist, for which he had intended to prepare himself, was in no way suited to his free, proud nature. It was to be his fate to witness both the triumphs and vexations of a great virtuoso at close quarters, for the most fêted woman pianist in Germany was to become his wife. No, a solitary, unsociable creature such as he, who could sing only when his inward monitor imperatively urged him to do so, was not fitted to go about from city to city, from court to court, and from drawing-room to drawing-room gathering the laurels of a day. At best, he would have spent his time, like the tempestuous Liszt or the exquisite Chopin—for both of whom he cherished a brotherly affection mingled with fervent admiration —oscillating between the dazzling acrobatic feats of a pianist and the composer's fever of creation. But these two forms of activity, which Chopin's subtle adaptability and Liszt's powerful genius succeeded in reconciling, are really incompatible, and Schumann's chaste fervour would have broken itself in the attempt to achieve them. So that, strictly speaking, it was thanks to this deplorable calamity that Schumann devoted himself entirely to composition, which was his true vocation, instead of wasting precious years in acquiring a complete mastery of the piano.

On his return to Leipzig, faithful to the undertakings which he had given to Wieck, he started seriously studying musical theory under the supervision of Heinrich Dorn, an excellent musician who was to occupy with distinction the position of conductor at the

Berlin Opera-house from 1849 to 1869. At first Schumann only worked indolently, for he was still convinced that the best method of acquiring a practical knowledge of composition is the study of the masters. But afterwards, under the impression of his terrible disappointment, he set to work seriously. He saw that it was necessary to "start from the A B C," and resigned himself. For more than a year and a half he worked assiduously and successfully and had arrived at canon, in double counterpoint, when, for reasons with which we are unacquainted, he fell out with his master. But this did not make him abandon his studies: on the contrary, he threw himself into them with all the more zeal, because he felt that, shy and proud as he was, he could do no real work except alone. He took Marpurg and Weber's treatise as his guide, and plunged ardently into the study of Bach. He analysed the fugues down to their minutest elements, and, thus equipped, he started writing, conscious, perhaps not quite justifiably, of having caught up, even in theory, with those of his rivals who had followed a regular course of study from their early years. Moreover, as he was to write to his mother in a letter of August 9, 1832, whereas music to some was an intoxication of the ear, and to others a series of arithmetical theorems, to him it was "the ennobled language of the soul"; though this did not prevent him from writing to the conductor Müller, on November 2 of the same year, asking him for lessons in theory. He had undertaken, he said, to write a symphony, and had worked without advice, *at his own sweet will*, but he distrusted his own

powers and felt the need to consult a master of the art.

During the early years of his first visit to Leipzig his psychical balance seems to have been fairly stable. I only note the panic—which was certainly of a morbid nature—that seized him when a cholera epidemic broke out at Leipzig during the summer. He wanted to flee to Italy, Augsburg, or Weimar; but soon his terror vanished as abruptly as it had begun. He began to go into society again, but what he most sought were friends whom he could admire and feel to be superior to him—a certain sign of a noble nature. "It is necessary for me," he wrote to Wieck on January 11, 1832, "always to have a few people about me who raise me above myself; with people who are my equals, or in whom I can admit no superiority, I easily become proud or ironical." First among this chosen few were the Wiecks. Undaunted by his master's harshness, he had gone to live with him, and during the intervals between her tours he continued to be on brotherly terms with Clara, the infant prodigy. He followed with his thoughts and good wishes her triumphal progress through Weimar, Erfurt, and Frankfurt, which was, however, less satisfactory in Paris. On January 11, 1832 he wrote a letter of congratulation to Wieck, full of heart-felt rejoicing at Clara's successes, and added, using a comparison which we shall frequently find in his writings: "Easily though the world may forget, it rarely fails to recognize exceptional gifts; though, all the same, it may be compared to a herd of cows, which look up when it lightens and then go on grazing quietly. Such flashes of lightning

were Schubert, Paganini, and Chopin, and such now is Clara."

And he enclosed a letter for Clara herself, in which a warm, pure, brotherly affection is apparent behind the laboriously ornate style. He writes to her at once as a child, who loves apples, the *Arabian Nights,* and stories about brigands, and as an artist, of whom he inquires about an F *in alt* in a Variation of Chopin's, besides informing her of the progress of his works: he has got as far as three-part fugue with Dorn and finished a sonata in B minor and a book of *Papillons,* which is to appear in a fortnight's time. "I often think of you, not as a brother thinks of his sister, or a friend of his friend, but as a pilgrim thinks of the distant altar-piece. . . ."

The diary which he kept, and referred to as his *Leipziger Tagebuch,* is full of Wieck and Clara. On May 3 of the same year (1832) he noted: "Now I have him back again. Whether this was due to absent-mindedness or exhaustion, he appeared weaker to me in every respect than before: only his arrogance, his fire and rolling eye were the same. Clara has become prettier, taller, and stronger and easier in her manner and has a slight French accent in speaking German, of which Leipzig will soon rid her. She played me her new *Capricen* [published first at Paris and afterwards at Leipzig], like a hussar, it seemed to me. Her childlike originality comes out in everything: so it is the third of the *Papillons* that she likes best." On the 4th he writes: "The friends met at Brand's [a restaurant at Leipzig], Wieck very nice, Clara childlike and simple. We went home very late, Clara and I arm-in-arm.

She now plays like a cavalry officer. The *Capricen* are nothing of the sort, but Impromptus or *Moments musicals* [*sic*] in Wieck's style." Again, on the 7th: "Went with Clara, Pfundt, and the children to the menagerie. Clara was silly and frightened." Or, on the 9th: "I played at home and worked at the *Intermezzi.* I mean to dedicate them to Clara." On the 16th: "Clara plays Field's concerto divinely, but the *Papillons* uncertainly and without understanding." Or, on the 23rd: "Clara and the *Papillons,* which she has not yet quite mastered; her conception is happy and in accordance with my ideas; but though it is full of soul and healthy exaltation, I find it lacking in delicacy. At Brand's, Clara was wild with gaiety." On the 25th: "Clara played me Bach's Second Fugue, clearly, accurately, and with a [a word in Schumann's manuscript is illegible] play of tone. . . . The old man [Wieck] complains that she has too little vanity. There is some truth in this. In the evening went with them and Rosalie [one of Schumann's sisters-in-law] to the Wasserschenke [a restaurant]. There we talked about a number of things quite freely and from the heart. Clara did not know whether a duck was a duck or a goose. We had a good laugh at this. . . . But I thank thee, my guardian angel, like a child for this spring." On the 27th: "While Clara was playing Field's concerto enchantingly, an angel appeared, the Carus [Frau Agnes Carus, his idol at Zwickau]. . . . I never heard Clara play as she did today—everything was masterly and everything beautiful." On the 28th: "In the evening there was a musical party in *Monsieur* Wieck's drawing-room. It was not the right audience

for the Bach fugue which Clara was obliged to play.—As for the *Papillons,* people seemed not to know what to think, for they looked at one another stupidly and could not grasp the rapid changes. Besides, Clara did not play them as well as on Saturday, and must have been tired, both mentally and physically. Towards eleven o'clock she played again, even more carelessly, it is true, but with more animation. Clara was very charming and lively. . . ." On May 29: "In the evening I read six fugues of Bach for piano duet at sight with Clara. I gave the Maid of Holland [Agnes Carus] a nice, soft kiss, and when I got home, about nine o'clock, I sat down to the piano, and my thoughts carried me away on such a stream that I felt as though flowers and gods were absolutely growing under my fingers. It was the idea C, F, G, C [the opening bars of the *Impromptus,* op. 5]." On June 1: "Clara is very wayward with her stepmother [Clementine Fechner, Wieck's second wife, whom he had married in 1828], who is certainly a most estimable woman. The 'old man' remonstrated with Clara. . . . But little by little he will fall under Clara's thumb, for she already gives orders like a Leonore—but she can also plead and cajole like a child." On June 4: "Clara was obstinate and tearful; firm and authoritative remonstrances would produce the best effects upon her moods and arouse in her a vanity which, when ripened into pride, is so very necessary to an artist." As we see, so early as this, Clara fills his thoughts more than a favourite sister would do. He could write to Wieck quite truthfully: "Every day on which I cannot talk to you or Clara is like a blank page in my life at Leip-

zig." The lives of the two young people were so intimately bound up together by their similar habits of life and aspirations that from this time onwards they seem inseparable. It is true that, in Robert particularly, other impressions were to be grafted upon these early ones, effacing them momentarily. He was certainly not insensible to the graces of Agnes Carus, enhanced by her musical talent. And soon we shall see him burning, or imagining himself to burn, with other flames. But Clara's image remained indelibly stamped upon his heart, and his feelings for her were like those family ties which seem to us a matter of course, and of whose sweetness we are no longer sensible, till their full strength is revealed to us at the moment when we lose them. A propitious occasion had only to offer itself, and his affection was to bloom once more, gaining colour from all that the gift of a man's entire self can add to the ingenuous affection of a boy.

But, close though Schumann's relations with the Wiecks were, he was not entirely engrossed in them. It was during his second visit to Leipzig that he really began to take part in the musical life of the place. By the beginning of the nineteenth century Leipzig had become the very centre of the musical life of Germany, as Schumann had at once realized on leaving the great city for Heidelberg, which, though so superior to it in natural beauty, was so poor in music. Leipzig could boast, in particular, of the incomparable massed effects of the choir of St. Thomas's, conducted by Johann Kuhnau from 1701 to 1722 and by the great Johann Sebastian himself from 1723 to 1750.

As in the time of these famous masters—and as still happens today—the choir of the Thomaskirche performed unaccompanied religious music every Saturday afternoon, and sang at morning service on Sunday to the accompaniment of the municipal orchestra. Besides this flourished the famous Gewandhaus concerts, founded by Hiller on November 25, 1781, which gave impeccable performances of the symphonies of Haydn, Mozart, and, after 1830, of Beethoven —even the Ninth Symphony, which was played several times, though with dubious success. The existence of the choirs of the Thomaskirche and the Singakademie enabled the Gewandhaus conductors to present the oratorios and masses of these great masters to the music-lovers of Leipzig. They gradually admitted contemporary musicians, such as Cherubini, Spohr, Schneider, Moscheles, Kalliwoda, Onslow, Marschner, Kuhlau, and others whose names have now fallen into utter oblivion. The soloists at these concerts—chiefly singers, but also instrumental players—were engaged for the season, and consisted not only of pianists, violinists, and violoncellists, as today, but also of flautists, basses, and double-basses, and even players on the big drum. Side by side with the famous society of the Gewandhaus, there were also the orchestral society Euterpe, founded in 1824, and Matthäi's Quartet Academy, which Schumann praised so highly in his critical articles. And, lastly, the municipal theatre (Stadttheater), though inferior to the purely musical institutions which we have just enumerated, since it was forced to make more concessions to the taste of the public which "paid the piper," none the less gave

good performances of Mozart's operas, Beethoven's *Fidelio,* and, starting from 1830, of Marschner's *Templer und Jüdin* and Spohr's *Jessonda.* What is more, every year, during the Leipzig Fair, the Italian opera company from Dresden, conducted by Morlacchi, gave remarkable interpretations of the operas of Rossini and Bellini, as well as of *Don Giovanni* and *Le Nozze di Figaro.*

Schumann profited to the full by these incomparable resources, and while listening to the masterpieces of the great masters felt not only creative energy awakening within him, but critical talent, which was not slow to develop, making this young musician one of the most remarkable of æstheticians and musical historians. On the one hand, he wrote the *Allegro* for pianoforte (op. 8) and some *Variations on a theme in G,* which have not come down to us, and had the joy of publishing the *Variations on the name Abegg* (op. 1), with which, "proud as the Doge of Venice, he for the first time espoused the great public, and saw the sky covered with hopes and presentiments," and the *Papillons* (op. 2), dedicated to his three sisters-in-law, which he stated to be a representation of the masquerade in the *Flegeljahre.* Both of these were welcomed with some reservations, but on the whole in a friendly fashion, by Rellstab, the redoubtable editor of *Iris;* and the latter were warmly praised by Camillo Grillparzer, brother of the great dramatist, in the *Musikalische Zeitung* of Vienna. On the other hand, on December 7, 1831 he published in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (Vol. XXXIII, no. 49) an

enthusiastic review of Chopin's *Don Juan Fantasia* (op. 2).

I may venture to say that of these musical and critical works, the last is the most interesting, original, and prophetic. Not only because Schumann reveals in it his brilliant literary gifts. Not only because it is no mere dry description or technical analysis, still less a dogmatic judgment such as those which were to be read in the musical reviews and gazettes of the day, but a lyrical effusion in which the poet-critic, instead of judging the work, enters into it with his whole being, trying to re-create all its characteristic features and shades of feeling, just as it originated and developed in the creative soul of the artist. And not only because, while interpreting a work of art, it may itself claim to be one, adopting the form of a story, with distinct characters, each of whom explains the work as it affects him personally—a story with dialogues and language rich with imagery, betraying the persistent influence of Jean Paul at every turn of phrase. Admirable models for this style had been furnished by the fragments of æsthetic and musical history scattered through the works of Hoffmann, in his *Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier,* the *Kreisleriana, Der Dichter und der Komponist, Kater Murr, Die Serapionsbrüder, Beethoven's Instrumental-Musik,* and *Das goldene Topf.* But here, among the characters created by Schumann, we see appearing for the first time, side by side with Meister Raro and Julius, a pair called Eusebius and Florestan, united by an indissoluble bond. Schumann does not tell us either who they are or whence they come; he means them to introduce

themselves to the reader of their own accord, by their mode of feeling and expression, and he purposely throws round them a shimmering halo of mystery.

Eusebius and Florestan. . . . On their very first appearance the contrast in their characters is clearly revealed: Eusebius, "with a suffering smile on his pale face and a tender ecstasy in his eyes," who, after performing Chopin's *Fantasia* with great purity of style, quietly says good-night to his friends "heated with wine, Chopin, and the arguments arising out of his work," and goes off home to dream of what he has heard; Florestan—whose name is perhaps borrowed from the hero of *Fidelio*—who is "in chains because he is fighting for the truth," whose enthusiasm is displayed in a noisier and more active way, and who, since he has no home, arrives at Julius's house by moonlight. Julius (the supposed writer of the article) talks interminably, evoking Chopin's piece in a series of sparkling metaphors and showing how it is "radiant with moonlight and filled with the magic of Faerie," while he points to "Leporello, full of laughter and jests, lurking behind the bush," to "the magic call and the rushing music of oboes and clarinets, and the flower-like B flat in which blooms the first kiss of love." And the finale—" 'Have you still some more wine, Julius?'—it is a finale after Mozart's own heart, all popping champagne-corks and clinking bottles." —Eusebius and Florestan, who, as Schumann himself divulges to us, are none other than the two egos into which he felt his nature to be divided—the one tender, yearning, and loving, ready to welcome both people and things with affection; the other fiery, passionate,

always quivering with emotion and full of unrest, as quick to extol the heroes of music as to rail against the Philistines, incapable of understanding the nobility of art—and still more against those who assume the lofty title of artist while at heart they are no more than money-changers in the temple, athirst for gain and facile notoriety.

Had Schumann already conceived the idea of a mysterious fraternity including both a Meister Raro, who should be an incarnation not only of the two sides of his own ego but also of Friedrich Wieck, and a Julius—the Christian name of Julius Knorr, a distinguished interpreter of Chopin? There is no evidence to justify such an assertion. We need only note that during the two and a half years that elapsed between his first critical essay and the foundation of the review in which Eusebius-Florestan and their companions were to revolutionize German music, the young artist continued to treat his hand, his moods alternating between hope and distress. Having tried homœopathy and electricity in vain, he now resigned himself to the idea that he would never recover the full use of his hand, and set to work courageously at composition. He wrote the *Intermezzi* (op. 4), the two books of *Studien nach Capricen von Paganini (Studies on Paganini's Caprices)* (op. 3), "a herculean labour" by which he wanted to "give public proof of his mastery of theory," various "characteristic pieces" which were to be included among the *Albumblätter*, the *Impromptus über ein Thema von Clara Wieck* (op. 5), gave the *Toccata* its definitive form, and, gaining entire confidence in himself, set to work on the first

movement of the symphony, about which, as we have seen, he asked the advice of G. W. Müller, conductor of the Euterpe orchestral society.

Schumann worked at this composition with particular care and zest, because it was his native town that was to witness its first performance. Indeed, Clara Wieck had been engaged for a concert at Zwickau on November 18, 1832, and Robert wanted to have his symphonic fragment played at it. The concert took place, and the young pianist won not only the enthusiastic applause of the public, but the affection of the musician's mother, who, after a long look at the girl, said: "You must marry Robert one day!" Prophetic words, which, however, aroused no echo in either Robert or Clara at the time when they were pronounced, although, as Eugenie Schumann tells us in her *Erinnerungen* (1926, p. 279), the latter was fond of telling her children in later days that she had been in love with their father since the age of thirteen. At the time of her visit to Zwickau she was exactly thirteen years old and, in spite of her talent and the success it brought her, was still a thorough child, laughing, joyous, and wayward. "Clara," as Robert wrote to his mother a few months later, "who, as always, is deeply attached to me, is the same as ever, wild and enthusiastic, running, jumping, and playing like a child, and then at times saying the profoundest things. It is a joy to see her qualities of heart and mind developing more and more rapidly, yet unfolding, as it were, leaf by leaf. Lately, as we were returning together from Connewitz (we go for a two or three hours' walk nearly

every day), I heard her say to herself: 'Oh, how happy I am, how happy!' "

In any case, he enjoyed his friend's triumph to the full, and in the August number of Herlossohn's *Komet* he praised her playing, above the collective signature of the Davidsbündler, as being extraordinary, not only from the technical point of view, but because it "goes straight to the heart and speaks to the soul." As for his own symphonic fragment, it had not impressed the public either at Zwickau or at Schneeberg, where it was repeated, but when it was performed at Leipzig in June 1833, it won him, according to his own account, "many friends among the greatest musical connoisseurs." So he was by no means discouraged, and spent five months peacefully at home, reading, dreaming, and composing.

By March 1833 he was back again in Leipzig and had taken up his quarters "in Riedel's garden," where, as he wrote to his mother on April 9, he had found "two charming, simple little rooms . . . looking out over green meadows and gardens which will soon be blooming with flowers," where, as he wrote to Clara on May 23, "everything is singing, humming, rustling, and shouting for joy, from the finches down to myself," and where "I am so glad when I see a ray of sunshine dancing on my piano, as though it would play with the music, which is, moreover, no more than sounding light." Here he worked in the morning, and read or improvised in the evening, the afternoon being given over to a walk. Here, too, he received his friends, the numbers of whom gradually swelled, and in whose company he conceived, as early as June, the

idea of publishing a musical review, the "tone and colour" of which, as he wrote to his mother on June 28, "shall be fresher and more varied than in other reviews," and which was to be written by professional composers and executants, instead of being edited by Civil Servants and "dilettantes." Among them were to be Wieck, Ortlepp, Lühe, Wendt, Lyser, Reissiger, and Krägen, with Franz Otto, of London. And at the same time as the review, or perhaps even earlier, though it probably only took definite shape in connexion with it, the idea of the famous brotherhood of the Davidsbündler came into his mind.

"At the end of the year 1833," wrote Schumann in the Introduction to his critical works, "a certain number, for the most part of young musicians, would meet every evening in Leipzig, as though casually, in the first place for sociable purposes, but just as much in order to exchange ideas on the art which was their meat and drink—namely, music. It cannot be said that the state of music in Germany was very satisfactory at this time. The stage was still dominated by Rossini, the piano almost exclusively by Herz and Hünten. And yet only a few years had gone by since Beethoven, C. M. von Weber, and Franz Schubert had been living among us. It is true that Mendelssohn's star was in the ascendant, and there were wonderful rumours about a Pole, Chopin. But it was not till later that these two masters exerted a lasting influence. Then, one fine day, an idea flashed across the minds of the young hotheads: 'Let us not be mere idle lookers-on; let us set to work to make things better, so that the poetry of art shall be restored to its place

of honour.' And so it was that the first numbers of a new musical review came into being. But the joy arising out of this united and unanimous group of young talents did not last very long. Death claimed a victim, in the person of one of the most beloved of the band, Ludwig Schunke. Some of the others left Leipzig altogether for a time. The enterprise was on the point of dissolution. It was then that one of them—who was, as it happens, that very musician of the group who had passed his life dreaming over the piano rather than among books—made up his mind to take in hand the editorship of the review, and assured its existence for nearly ten years, till 1844. . . . I must also mention another society, which was more than secret, since it only existed in the head of its founder: the Davidsbűndler. It seemed a convenient idea to enable various aspects of artistic conception to find expression, by creating artistic types of an opposite nature, of which the most notable were Florestan and Eusebius, whom it was Meister Raro's mission to reconcile. The idea of the Davidsbűndler ran like a scarlet thread through the whole review, wedding truth and poetry in a humorous vein. Later on, these companions, to whom the public gave a good reception at the time, entirely disappeared from the review, and from the moment when a peri led them away to distant lands, nobody has heard of any more literary works from their pen."

Such are the terms in which, eleven years later, Schumann described the genesis of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik,* and of the Davidsbűndler at the same time, when he was collecting the articles which he had written for it in book form. His story does not

quite give an impression of the feverish excitement amid which the young composer and his companions lived during the period of incubation. It is not quite accurate that he never thought of bringing into existence otherwise than "in his head" a league of young musicians who, beneath the standard of King David, the poet-musician and conqueror of the Philistines, should advance to the attack upon Philistinism, pedantry, and the acrobatics of professional performers, set up altars to the heroes of music, Bach and Handel, Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, and give an enthusiastic reception to all serious endeavour, to all that gave promise of a fresh sensibility, and to every novel conception of the possibilities of musical expression, such as might be discovered in Berlioz, Chopin, and even Liszt. He certainly felt some hesitation, for though, on October 10, 1841, he wrote to Franz Brendel, in terms which bear out those of the Introduction quoted above, that he had never been a member of a society, and that for this reason he had never given the Davidsbündler a real existence, we read in a letter to his friend and collaborator Zuccalmaglio, dated May 18, 1836—and therefore nearer to those tumultuous evenings of 1838 when the idea of the *Bund* took shape simultaneously with the review—that he wanted "to give a real life to the Davidsbündler." In any case, the plan was quite in the romantic spirit, recalling those which had actually been carried into effect by the coteries of Jena, Berlin, and Heidelberg; but even if it passed through his mind, he did not act upon it. The Davidsbündler were literary fictions such as we find in Tieck's *Phantasus* and, above

all, in the *Serapionsbrüder* of Hoffmann, whose Severin, Cyprian, Theodor, Ottmar, Marzell, and Lothar undoubtedly served as models for the supposed members of the *Bund;* but with this difference: that a great number of the latter existed in the flesh, their names as *Bündler* being pseudonyms which they had adopted, or with which Schumann had provided them without consulting them.

In default of the league, then, Schumann's efforts were concentrated upon the *Zeitschrift.* His life of unsociable solitude and idyllic calm became filled with feverish excitement and peopled with companions. Young musicians grouped themselves round him, attracted not only by the charm which Schumann exerted over those who were capable of understanding him, but also by the crusade in which he invited his friends to emulate him. Their evenings at the Kaffeebaum became heated and tumultuous. Amid the cigar-smoke—not to speak of the fumes of the spirituous liquors in which Schumann and his friends indulged freely—the most adventurous plans were drawn up, the most ambitious hopes were kindled, and the noblest ideals were evolved.

But now, once again, at a culminating point in Schumann's life, his evil genius came knocking at the door. Exhausted, no doubt, by the feverish strain which the conception and working-out of his plan had put upon his nerves, and also, no doubt, by the agitated life which they had caused him to lead, he was struck down by a serious attack of neurasthenia. It began in September with an attack of extreme excitement, accompanied, as he wrote to his mother, by

violent rushes of blood to the head, inexpressible mental anguish, loss of breath, and fainting fits, still further aggravated, firstly, by the news of the death of one of his sisters-in-law, and next of that of his brother Julius. He durst not remain alone in the new lodging on a fourth storey to which he had moved, and asked one of his friends to come and share his room. During the night of October 17–18 his excitement and mental anguish rose to a perfect paroxysm, and the sick lad tried to throw himself out of the window; this was the "terrible" night mentioned in his notebook. The crisis was followed by profound depression, a horror of crowds, "horrible" melancholy, and such apathy that, as he said, he was transformed into "a statue," devoid of all sensation. "It was during the summer of 1833," he wrote later to his fiancée. "At that time I was seldom happy, something was lacking; the melancholy caused by the death of one of my brothers grew steadily worse; such was the state of my heart when I heard of the death of Rosalie. During the night of October 17–18 there suddenly came into my mind the most hideous thought that a man can possibly conceive, the most terrible idea with which heaven can punish him—the thought that I was losing my reason. It took possession of me with such violence that all consolation and all prayer—as well as all banter—were powerless against it. This terror possessed me everywhere. I could not draw breath at the thought. Then, seized by a horrible excitement, I rushed to see a doctor and told him all, how I often lost consciousness, and did not know how this agony would end, how I could find no way of keeping it at

bay, and how my distress was so extreme that I was thinking of taking my life." His mother summoned him to her side. But he was afraid to go to her, "for fear something might happen to him." But this first attack of the disorder which was to carry him off twenty-three years later did not last. "By forcing myself to work I gradually brought life back." By the end of the year he was completely cured, though this first attack left him with a horror of the upper storeys of houses and of sharp instruments. The crisis, then, was a violent but passing one, which would not have cast a shadow over Schumann's life had it not been the symptom of a curiously delicate nervous constitution, and the forerunner of longer and graver crises, foreshadowing the one in which, after a slow disintegration of his psychical existence, this fine genius was in the end to sink into the darkness and despair of madness.

By the opening of the year 1834—the "memorable year *(das merkwürdige Jahr)*"—Schumann was on his feet again and seemed to have quite forgotten the days of horror through which he had just passed. It was indeed a memorable year, full to overflowing of incident, a sort of *Carnaval* in real life: a series of marked figures passing by, companions thronging round, love-affairs or sentimental friendships, the composition of the *Études symphoniques* and of *Carneval*, and, above all, the publication of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*.

Schumann's first love has long been surrounded by a mystery, which has gradually been dispelled by fresh

evidence. It started like a romantic novel. The young musician made the acquaintance at Wieck's house of Ernestine von Fricken, the daughter of a rich Bohemian baron, and possessed, like himself, with a passion for music, who, again like himself, had come to Leipzig to perfect herself by taking lessons from the overbearing Wieck. As soon as the girl arrived, Clara pointed out her dearest friend, Robert, to her notice. Ernestine did not seem very much interested: it appeared that there was a young man in the little Bohemian town where she lived to whom she was entirely devoted. But so soon as she saw Robert, the image of her suitor at Asch grew fainter, then faded completely away. At that very moment our hero was on the upward grade, at the most flourishing period of his development. He was surrounded by the double aureole of a musician and a poet and was the leading figure of a school; while at the same time there was a softness, a delicacy, a melancholy about him which a young girl's inexperienced heart could not resist for long—not to mention the fact that, according to the description of him given a few years later by his friend Thrus, he must have been very handsome, and even more "interesting" then handsome: he had fair, silky *(weich)* hair, fine blue eyes, though neither large nor full of energy, as though he was constantly listening to what was passing within his soul; his carriage was erect, but his gait was so languid and weary that it seemed as if this great body had no backbone. How could Ernestine have failed to be attracted by so much soft, alluring sweetness? And so, as Clara wrote to Robert four years later, soon she had no need to

praise her great friend to the young Bohemian. As soon as he came to the house, she had to fetch Ernestine. And once the young people were together, the little messenger was completely forgotten. "You talked only to her . . . with me you merely played all sorts of games. This hurt me a good deal, but I consoled myself with the thought that it was simply because you had me always with you; besides, Ernestine was older than I was. Strange feelings stirred my heart (young as it was, it already beat ardently) when we went for walks and you talked to Ernestine, and from time to time played some pranks with me. This was the reason why my father sent me to Dresden, where I regained hope; even at that time I used to think how nice it would be, all the same, if he were to be my husband." Nor was it long before Robert's heart took fire. When Clara returned in March for her half-sister's baptism, the understanding between these two young people was complete: "Ernestine was very curt and distrustful," and Clara, already in love, felt that she had "lost her paradise." And so when, in September, the foreign visitor left Leipzig, she was not much regretted by the Wiecks. "We did not miss her at all," wrote Wieck in Clara's diary, "for during the last few weeks she had become quite a stranger in our house and had lost all her amiability and frankness. Moreover, she had forgotten all that had been taught her with so much trouble. She was like a young plant . . . scorched by the sun—that is to say, by Herr Schumann."

And indeed, the "sun" shed more and more burning rays upon the "young plant." "Two glorious

feminine beings," he wrote to his mother, "have entered our circle." One was Emilie List, who was to become Clara's most devoted friend, "the other, Ernestine, the daughter of a rich Bohemian baron, von Fricken, and of a Countess Zedwitz, a splendidly pure, childlike nature, tender and pensive, most fervently attached to me and to all things artistic . . . such, in short, as I should like my wife to be. And I tell you in confidence, dear mother: if the future were to ask me the question: 'Which would you choose?'—I should answer firmly: 'The latter!' But how far off that is! I already renounce the prospect of a closer union, easy as it might, perhaps, be for me." And as though the picture of his little childhood's friend rose up once more in his memory with irresistible force, at the very moment when he was about to give himself to another, he added: "Clara is in Dresden, and her genius is developing more and more. The letters which she writes (even to me) are remarkably intelligent."

But it was not to his mother that he confided his most ardent dreams. He had made the acquaintance, rather unwillingly, of a young lady named Henriette Voigt, a friend of his beloved Schunke and of Ernestine, who became a friend of his own too. Henriette Voigt, the Aspasia and Eleonore of the Davidsbündler, and a remarkable musician, as befitted a pupil of L. Berger, was one of those "beautiful souls"—Robert called her his "A minor friend"—numbers of whom flourished in romantic Germany, all living in and for art, and endeavouring to transform their life itself into a work of art; she was sweet and understanding, full of delicacy and tender sentiment, as though by a

presentiment of her own premature death, and was attached to Schumann by a feeling that was rather more than friendship, while his affection for her was of the same order. The letters which he wrote her in August and September were all throbbing with exalted sentiment. He speaks of Ernestine's "Madonna-like head," of her childlike devotion; and describes her as "gentle and bright as the eye of heaven shining blue through the clouds" (November 2, 1834). And again, on September 13, in a still more exalted strain: "What a day, what a night, what a morning—every nerve was a tear! I wept like a child over Ernestine's words in the margin, but when I read the other note to you, then my strength gave way. Is it weak to say all this? It is my Ernestine, whom I love beyond all measure, and you, Henriette, who are my beloved friend." Wieck, too, took the part of the lovers and reassured the girl's father. "A great affection," he wrote on August 1, "united the two young people. But there was nothing but what was noble in their intimacy. . . . How much I should have to write," he continued, "to give a more exact description of this composer and writer of genius, a little capricious and obstinate, but noble, splendid, enthusiastic, highly gifted, and of the deepest intellectual culture!" The father was reassured and allowed Robert to come and see Ernestine at Asch during the last days of October and to go back again on December 4 with his sister-in-law Therese. B. Litzmann maintains that there was no engagement, strictly speaking. Perhaps this was so, but at any rate they both regarded themselves as engaged, and had the consent of their parents. "Ernestine has

written me a very happy letter. She has sounded her father through her mother, and he will give her to me —Henriette, he will give her to me—do you feel what that means?—and yet this state of torment that I am in, as though I dreaded to be allowed to accept this treasure, because I know that it is in ill-omened hands. If you wanted to give a name to my suffering, I could not find one—*I believe that it is pain itself*—I could find no better word for it—alas! and perhaps it is also very love, and longing for Ernestine!" (to Henriette Voigt, November 7).

Was there something more than mere words in this strange effusion, and had Robert already foreseen the grief of the separation which was inevitably approaching? What is certain is that, shortly afterwards, this passion which had seemed as though it was to light up the two young people's whole life faded away and died out—in Schumann, at least. By the early months of 1835 the engaged couple were communicating with each other at longer intervals. And on January 1, 1836 Schumann wrote Ernestine a letter breaking off the engagement. She was very unhappy at first, and six years later married a Count Zedwitz, a relative of her mother's, an elderly man who died eight months after the marriage. Schumann wrote the young widow an affectionate letter of condolence and in 1841 dedicated a book of songs to her (the *Drei Gesänge von Chamisso*, op. 31). She died of typhoid in 1844.

What was the explanation of this rupture, in which Schumann took the initiative, and which filled him with remorse for a long time afterwards? Was it the instability of his feelings? But so soon as he became

conscious of his love for Clara, no other woman seems ever to have played any part in his life. Was it the fact that Ernestine von Fricken—who was good and charming, but not very cultivated, as the letters of hers which we have bear witness, by their mistakes both of grammar and of style—was incapable of satisfying a rich and well-stored mind like that of Robert? Possibly. But there were reasons of a more material order for the change in Schumann which caused him to resign himself to abandoning his fiancée. Ernestine was not the daughter, but the "adopted child" of the "rich Bohemian baron." Born on September 7, 1816 at Neuberg, near Grűn, in Bohemia, she was the natural child of Erdmann Lindauer, a manufacturer at Grűn, and of an unmarried woman, the Countess Franziska Ernestine von Zedwitz, and was subsequently adopted by the Baron von Fricken. It is certain that, in entering upon this engagement, Robert was unaware of the irregularity in the young girl's birth. We have several confidential statements of his on the subject of his engagement and its breaking off. On the one hand, after his nervous break-down during the winter of 1833 the doctor had recommended him to marry, which sheds a slightly hygienic and quite unromantic light upon this meeting of souls, described with such lyrical transports.

But there was another and even worse reason. In February 1838 he explained to his future wife, Clara Wieck, that, after supposing his fiancée to be rich, he had learnt that she was poor. He had then begun to feel afraid that this marriage might hamper his artistic career and that he might be obliged to work like a

labourer to earn a living for his family. And finally, in 1853, he confided to Wasielewski that it was the irregularity in Ernestine's birth that had prevented him from marrying her. All this is human, only too human, but it does not square very well with what we know of the candour and nobility of Robert's character. We may grant that in writing to Clara, who was jealous of his first love, troubled by his inconstancy, and moreover, as we shall see, by no means devoid of practical common sense, he purposely represented this marriage as a "business proposition," which came to nothing. We may also grant that, though he was unconscious of it, something of his mother's commercial spirit and devotion to middle-class conventionality may have affected his mind at a certain time of his life, though his own instinct was more in the direction of disinterestedness and contempt for prejudice. And we may conclude that, after all, the attraction which Ernestine had for him was not as lasting as he had imagined; that, even apart from his doctor's advice, it was natural, after the shock from which he had suffered, that he should have felt the need of setting in order not only his sentimental life, but also that of his mind and senses, of making a home and taking refuge in a loving woman's heart; and that, a few months after his engagement, he should have perceived that the woman who could fill his life was not Ernestine, but Clara Wieck, and that this had been so for a long time past—or, indeed, always.

Moreover, the life that Schumann was leading at that moment was so full of a whirl and tumult of

excitement that he had no leisure to sound his feelings and put them to the test. The idea of his review was taking shape. Around him was grouped an imposing staff and a considerable body of helpers. In the first place, there were Wieck and Julius Knorr, the Julius of his critical article and an enthusiastic admirer of Chopin; then there was the man whom Schumann most dearly loved, but who was so soon snatched from him, the man whom he guessed, on first seeing him one evening at the Kaffeebaum, to be "him whom he was seeking," "with a face which some said to be that of a St. John, others that of a Roman Emperor, while nobody had any idea that it was that of an artist," the pianist Ludwig Schunke. Besides these three men, who, with Robert, were to form the editorial committee, there were Ludwig Bank, a pupil of Ludwig Berger, of whom we shall have occasion to speak later, Fritz Friedrich, the painter and writer of short stories, Stegmayer, Ortlepp, Reuter, and Lühe in Leipzig, Stephen Heller in Paris, Franz Otto in London, Joseph Fischhof in Vienna, Richard Wagner in Dresden, and then again Zuccalmaglio, Kossmaly, the pastor Keferstein, his former master Heinrich Dorn, old Ludwig Berger, and many others whose names are forgotten and unworthy of notice. He found a publisher, E. Hartmann, and the curiosity aroused in the musical world was so lively that, as he wrote to his mother, even before the first number appeared, he had three hundred subscribers.

At last, on April 3, 1834, appeared the first number of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik,* to which he devoted all his strength until he went to Vienna; on his

return, however, it seemed to him to hinder his progress. "The editorship of the review can only be a side issue for me," he wrote in 1840 to Keferstein; so he tried to entrust it to Kossmaly, and finally, in 1844, handed it over to Oswald Lorenz. After a few months the latter gave up the editorship to Franz Brendel, who remained a faithful disciple of his master, though he afterwards became rather heterodox. Since the *Zeitschrift* was gradually to pass out of Schumann's life, I shall attempt to give here a rapid sketch of his critical work, with apologies for departing from the chronological order to which I have strictly adhered hitherto and intend to return after this digression.

At the moment when the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* appeared, musical criticism was not in a very flourishing condition in Germany. The chief organs concerned with music were the *Allgemeine Musikzeitung* of G. W. Frick, an ex-priest, who regarded all serious music as "affected and full of mannerisms," and, out of all Schubert's vast wealth of compositions, had only mentioned a single song and the Symphony in C major in his gazette; the *Iris* of Berlin, edited by Rellstab, an ex-officer, who loudly proclaimed his preference for Haydn's quartets as compared with those of Mozart and Beethoven, boasted of having opposed Schubert with all his power, and, later, saw nothing in the works of Chopin and Schumann but a "school of errors"; *Cäcilia,* edited by G. Weber, a high judicial functionary *(General-Staatsprokurator)*; and the *Wiener Anzeiger,* edited by Castelli, who was also a Civil Servant and, like the others, lauded the

incompetent productions of his contemporaries to the skies, while making fun heavily of all new and daring efforts.

The *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* was to take its stand against all this undistinguished, amateurish criticism, this adulation of mediocrity and prostitution of the art which was deep and true; it was on "this set" that it was to "fall with all its might," though this was of little use, for they were "like a herd of cattle, that looks up when the lightning flashes, then goes on grazing peacefully." The prospectus stated that it was intended, in the first place, for musicians, "to whom it will afford an opportunity of expressing what they have seen with their own eyes and experienced with their own intelligence, and in which they can defend themselves against all false or narrow criticism." It was to attack pitilessly the cowardice which assumes an air of impartiality in order to hide its poor-spiritedness, weakness, and ugliness. It was to fall with all its might upon Heinrich Herz, Thalberg, Hűnten, and their like, on the "night-cap style of Pleyel, Vanhals, etc.," on that whole period of decadence during which, so short a time after the death of Beethoven and Schubert, "legions of little girls were madly in love with Czerny." A truce to compliments, courtesies, and incense-burning: "He who dare not attack what is bad is little able to defend what is good."[1]

But the *Zeitschrift* did not mean to be solely "a destructive enterprise." It intended to build on the ruins which it had accumulated. "Our intentions are simple: to draw attention to the past and the works it has

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, Reclam ed., I, 50.

produced, to show that it is from these pure well-springs alone that new artistic beauties can draw strength—and, next, to fight against the immediate past, whose aim was merely to raise externals to a high pitch; in fact, to prepare the way for a new poetic era, and hasten its advent."

Schumann could boast that he carried out this program to the best of his power. By universal consent, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* contributed largely towards producing a more healthy musical atmosphere, purifying the taste and guiding the judgment of music-lovers. The scale of values which it drew up has been almost entirely ratified by posterity. In the first place, the young critic taught his contemporaries to do justice to Bach, among the old masters, and Beethoven, among the modern ones. He showed that Bach is the father of German music, and of great music in general, and that the old cantor is the most modern of all musicians, approximating even more closely to the experiments of the romantics than Beethoven himself. He was no doubt sensible to the grace of Haydn and the divine beauty of Mozart. But Beethoven was the object of his fervent admiration—especially the Beethoven of the Ninth Symphony and the latest quartets, who had surpassed even himself in these sublime works, going beyond what music had hitherto seemed capable of expressing. Schumann returned indefatigably to the symphonies, to the sonatas, in which Beethoven has lent the piano the myriad voices of the orchestra and endowed it with the power of expressing all nature and all humanity as reflected in a lofty soul. Among Beethoven's successors it was

Schubert whom his unerring glance singled out as the most gifted and the nearest to the all-powerful master. He praised with equal enthusiasm Schubert's two symphonies—of which he had the joy of discovering the second—his sonatas, the whole of his piano music, and, above all, his *Lieder:* the distinctive feature of Schubert's piano compositions, he says, is "that they are written for this instrument, that they spring from the very heart of the piano"; and Schubert's music in general is distinguished by the fact that "it knows how to translate into sounds the subtlest feelings, the thoughts, and, what is more, the events and conditions of life. He has succeeded in expressing all the innumerable forms in which human life and dreams clothe themselves. All that he has seen with his eyes and touched with his hands is transmitted into music; as in the case of Deucalion and Pyrrha, from the stones which he casts over his shoulder living beings arise." He was the greatest since Beethoven, and, "a mortal enemy of Philistinism, he was a musician in the sublimest sense of the word."

But it was one of the most noble traits of Schumann as a critic that he was not content to extol the mighty dead. With all his energy and all the authority conferred upon him by the *Zeitschrift* he upheld the "young," his rivals and competitors, without jealousy, regardless of personal considerations, schools, and cliques, and without fanatically espousing any theory. His own preference, it is true, was for the "poets" of music—we may recall the "poetic era" of the prospectus—for the romantics, who, building upon the foundations of Beethoven and Schubert, achieve the

aim which they have set before them of wedding poetry and music, the language of the soul and the language of sounds, and, like Schumann himself, making music "the reflection of life's commotion," the interpreter at once of the musician and the man. It was in this spirit that he devoted twenty-two pages of the *Zeitschrift* to a wonderful study of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique,* in which he detected "roughnesses and oddities, delicacy and originality," while he praised its "wealth of melody and harmony," and its remarkable orchestration, taking it as a point of departure for expounding his own views on the limits of musical expression and the scope of program-music.[2] In this spirit he paid a most splendid tribute to Mendelssohn, "the Raphael of music," who threw open to his art the fairyland of Shakspere's fantastic comedy, with its changing lines and winged fancies, and succeeded in evoking, by his sound-pictures, the proud, icy solitudes of Scotland and the soft plains of Italy, bathed in light, and, as it were, humanized; and, while remaining true to the Hellenic harmony of his soul, was also the interpreter of the religious fervour of *St. Paul* and *Elijah.* In the same way he never ceased to champion the genius of Chopin, though he was at no time blind to his faults: "When enthusiasm, grace, presence of mind, fire, and nobility are in question, who would not think of him? But again, when strangeness, morbid eccentricity, and even hatred and ferocity are in question, who would not think of him, whose works are cannon lurking among flowers, and whose

[2] See Basch, *Schumann,* in the series *Les Maîtres de la musique* (Alcan), pp. 70–81.

sublime achievements and blemishes are alike explained by his race?" It was thus that he divined, beneath Liszt's acrobatic feats of virtuosity, the living presence of a profound musical soul and a creative power which were only waiting to find expression. It was thus that, among the new-comers, he singled out Henselt, that classic among the romantics, Bennett, "the angelic Englishman," Stephen Heller, Ferdinand Hiller, Taubert, Robert Franz, Ludwig Lőwe, Marschner, C. G. Műller, all standard-bearers of the new art heralded by the *Bűndler*. But he also knew how to do justice to those who were prevented by their age or inward tendencies from taking part in the movement directed towards the enfranchisement and broadening of music, of which Schumann and his friends were the embodiment: Hummel, Moscheles, Ries (the faithful champion of Beethoven), John Field, whose Seventh Concerto, "in which everything is so good that one could embrace it," he lauds to the skies, old Ludwig Berger (Mendelssohn's master), Spohr, Lachner, and Taubert.

In his critical studies he dealt in the main with instrumental music, and was at this time somewhat ostentatiously scornful of opera, in which, moreover, as we have said, the public of Leipzig did not take very much interest. So often as the opportunity presented itself, he paid a tribute to Weber, who, "after Beethoven, occupies, with a few foreigners, the throne of music"; but he mentioned him comparatively rarely. He spoke of Cherubini and Spontini with respect, followed Marschner's efforts sympathetically, spoke ironically about Rossini—"who is, no doubt, an

excellent decorative painter, but would be absolutely nothing without the lighting and perspective of the theatre"—and reserved all the explosions of his righteous wrath for Meyerbeer, whom he had taken seriously as a musician at the time of *Il Crociato,* suspending judgment upon him till the appearance of *Les Huguenots,* but from that time onward classing him definitely on the level of Franconi's circus. On hearing the latter opera he foamed with rage and disgust: "Meyerbeer only knows how to astonish and tickle the ears of the crowd," he said, "and to deck himself out with the cast-off raiment of Rossini, Mozart, Hérold, Weber, Bellini, and even Spohr"; his whole work is nothing but "grimacing, vulgarity, unnatural, unmoral, and the very negation of music."

As for Wagner, his name was not mentioned, though he was a contributor to the *Zeitschrift,* having sent from Paris, in particular, an important article on Rossini's *Stabat Mater*—and although he was on cordial terms with Schumann, having pressed him to be present at the first performance of *Rienzi,* and sent him the manuscript score of *The Flying Dutchman.* Schumann did indeed admit two anonymous, and, what is more, quite lukewarm articles on Wagner from the pen of E. Heine. But in May 1844, by which time he was already less accessible and sympathetic to attempts at innovation, and held that romanticism, as he had learnt and practised it, ought to constitute a new classicism, he also admitted Schladebach's article on "Wagner and Mozart," which was deliberately directed against the Wagnerian conceptions. Little by little, mainly owing to the influence of Mendelssohn

and Clara, Schumann came out as an opponent of the neo-German *(Neudeutsch)* school, of which Wagner was the leader and Liszt the prophet, in spite of the fact that Schumann had himself contributed towards its birth and was nearer to it than he himself knew. It was only in the theatrical note-book *(Theaterbüchlein)* which he kept from 1847 to 1850, and in letters, that Schumann divulged to himself and some of his friends what he thought of Wagner. As a man, Wagner was definitely antipathetic to him, though he did not fail to recognize his greatness: Wagner was too exuberant, too excitable, too absorbed in himself, too theatrical, to be in harmony with Schumann's reticent, reserved, modest nature. Above all, he was too talkative for anybody so remarkably taciturn. There is a well-known anecdote, related by Hanslick in his *Musikalische Stationen,* according to which Schumann complained that Wagner talked incessantly, while Wagner complained that Schumann was really an impossible fellow, letting him talk all the time and remaining there as if he were dumb. At first, too, Wagner inspired him with nothing but repugnance as an artist. "No doubt," he wrote to Mendelssohn on October 25, 1845, apropos of *Tannhäuser,* "Wagner is a clever fellow, full of ideas and audacious beyond measure, but he is really incapable of conceiving four bars that are beautiful, or even good, and writing them down consecutively. What they all lack is . . . the skill to handle a four-part chorale. . . . This music is not a whit superior to *Rienzi;* indeed, it is more insipid and forced." But after hearing it he wrote, on November 12: "I must take back much of what I

said about *Tannhäuser* after reading the score. On the stage the whole impression is quite different. I was powerfully affected by many passages." And on January 7: "*Tannhäuser* contains some deep, original stuff, a hundred times better than his previous operas. . . . In short, he may be of great importance to the stage . . . I consider the technical side, the instrumentation, admirable, incomparably more masterly than what he has done before." And finally, after hearing it again on August 7, 1847, he entered in his note-book: "An opera of which one cannot speak briefly. It certainly has a touch of genius. If Wagner were as full of melody as he is of ideas, he would be the man of the age."

Such, briefly, are Schumann's chief judgments. What makes them valuable is not only their justice, which has led posterity to adopt almost all of them, but the forcefulness with which he stated them: his critical method is as important as the results to which it led. He expounded his views on this subject on several occasions. He fully realized the difficulties against which musical criticism has to struggle. It has no "weights and measures" like those which are at the disposal of language or of the plastic arts in which nature, whose forms they borrow, serves as a touchstone. "Music is an orphan, whose father and mother none can name, and perhaps the attraction of its beauty lies in the mystery of its origin. The writers in the *Zeitschrift* have been blamed for laying stress upon the *poetical element* in music at the expense of its scientific elements." But they chose this path deliberately. "To them, *the highest criticism is that*

which itself leaves an impression similar to that aroused by the work which calls it forth . . . in this sense Jean Paul might contribute to the understanding of a symphony or sonata by Beethoven, by forming, as it were, its poetic counterpart, more than the batch of criticasters who set up ladders against the colossus and measure it meticulously with their yard-rule." Criticism worthy of the name "has to concern itself with three things: the flower, the root, and the fruit; that is to say, poetic content, form, and technique. It has first to distinguish the poetry of a work, that which constitutes its basis and inmost soul. Next, it has to study it from the point of view of technique, analysing the architecture of the periods and the relations between melody and harmony. Finally, it has to examine how far it is suited to the capacity of the person called upon to execute it; to the singer's voice, or the pianist's or violoncellist's hands."[3]

To re-create by criticism the very impression made by the original work—that is to say, to turn criticism into a work of art of the same nature as that with which it is dealing—a work which, though, no doubt, a reproduction of another, ought, if successful, to relive the experience of the original work, and cause others to relive it, too, so faithfully and with such intensity that it becomes an original itself; to transpose into another sphere (namely, that of words and ideas) a musical work having its origin in the world of the senses and emotions; to bring the composer and his audience close together by presenting him to them with all his human qualities, his artistic apprenticeship, and his sentimental and intellectual experiences

[3] Op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 58–67.

—such is Schumann's ideal, and it may be said that he achieved it with such success that certain modern writers on music, such as Arthur Seidl, have gone so far as to prefer the critic and æsthetician of the *Zeitschrift* to the composer of the *Lieder*.

Schumann's peculiar art as a critic is to succeed in reliving the experience contained in the works which he examines, and so cause them to live before us. As we have seen, he hesitated for a long time between poetry and music. And now, in his musical criticism, the power was granted him of uniting the two qualities which had existed in him apart, and even in antagonism: poetical inspiration and musical inspiration. His criticism is, in fact, essentially a poetic creation. His most characteristic articles are those in which a musical work caused him to see images arising, moving, coming into conflict or blending in his own mind —images which, in spite of their apparent desultoriness, end in forming, as it were, little dramas or, rather, fragments of stories. Thus in writing of a sonata by Taubert he says: "The sonata begins in an undertone. It is as though everything were being got ready and set in order to begin with. The melody grows stronger. The *tutti* breaks in, as though in an orchestra. A figure is rapidly sketched. . . . But now the basses rise up questioningly in the major key. A voice replies, shyly and beautifully: 'Do not look at me so harshly. I am not hurting anybody,' and shrinks close to the first soft melody. Next the rapid figures spring to join them inquisitively. The scene becomes more animated; a little, delicate, merry idea can scarcely make itself heard. The music rises and falls, sways to and fro; a firm hand intervenes and brings

this to a conclusion. Then two new, pallid forms enter, a man and a woman, who come forward and tell of the joys and sorrows which they have experienced. Others join them, full of sympathy. 'Pull yourselves together,' they say. 'Away with tears; let your eyes dart lightning.' 'But it is grief for those who are no more; forgive us.' Then everything subsides, the opposing elements are united, things known go their way side by side with things unknown. And a familiar voice says heartily: 'Why be so furious about everything?' 'Hear me once more,' replies the first voice."[4]

And again, in writing about the A major Symphony: "It is the most joyful of weddings, the bride is a heavenly child with a rose, a single rose, in her hair. If I am not much mistaken, the Introduction shows the guests arriving, greeting one another with ceremonious bows; if I am not much mistaken, the merry flutes are reminding us that joy at Rosa's betrothal reigns in the whole village, with its may-pole decked with gaily coloured ribbons; if I am not very much mistaken, her mother seems to be asking her, with a pale face: 'Do you know that we have got to part?'—upon which Rosa, overcome with emotion, throws herself into her arms, drawing the young man to them with her other hand. . . . And now a deep silence falls upon the village [Florestan had now come to the *Allegretto,* and was picking out a passage here and there]; only a butterfly goes fluttering by, or a cherry-blossom falls to the ground. . . ."[5]

Again, he writes about Schubert's *Deutsche Tänze:*

[4] Op. cit., p. 79.
[5] Op. cit., pp. 141–2.

"A whole carnival is dancing in the *Deutsche Tänze*. 'How splendid it would be,' exclaimed Florestan aside to Fritz Friedrich, 'if you were to go and fetch your magic lantern and throw the masked ball on the screen!' The other rushes off in delight and is soon back again. The following group was among the most charming: The room dimly lit—Zilia at the piano, with the wound-dealing rose among her curls—Eusebius in his black velvet jacket bending over her chair —Florestan, dressed in the same way, standing on the table and acting as showman—Serpentin with his legs round Walt's neck, riding him up and down the room from time to time—the painter, *à la* Hamlet, with bovine gaze showing off his shadowy pictures, some of which were already running from the wall to the ceiling with long, spidery legs. Zilia struck up her piece, and Florestan spoke something to the following effect, only in a much more elaborate style: No. 1. A major. A press of masked figures. Drums. Trumpets. A misty light. A man in a wig: 'Everything seems to be going on very well.'—No. 2. A comical figure scratching itself behind the ear, and saying: 'Pst, pst!' all the time. It disappears.—No. 3. Harlequin with his arms akimbo. He tumbles head over heels out of the door. —No. 4. Two stiff, well-bred masks dance together, saying very little to each other.—No. 5. A slender cavalier pursuing a mask: 'At last I have caught you, fair zither-player!' 'Let me go!'—and so on."[6]

How many such extracts could be quoted which, though no doubt inspired by Jean Paul and Hoffmann, have neither the laborious prolixity of the former nor

[6] Op. cit., pp. 230–1.

the rather puerile diabolism of the latter, and are indeed Schumann's very own in their blend of high spirits, gaiety, verve, and melancholy, their tendency to take refuge in dreams, and their plaintive tenderness! But I am forced to limit my quotations and shall content myself with drawing the reader's particular attention to the sparkling carnival oration pronounced by Florestan after hearing the Ninth Symphony, in which his usual interlocutor, Eusebius, says, as though speaking to himself: "Beethoven! What is not contained in that word! The deep sonority of these syllables alone seems, as it were, to echo out into an eternity. . . ."

Florestan and Eusebius. What gives their peculiar character to Schumann's criticisms, and first attracted the attention of his contemporaries, was the part played in the *Zeitschrift* by the mysterious fraternity of the Davidsbündler. The poet-musician amuses himself by making these literary puppets, created by his imagination, live before his readers' eyes, by giving each of them its own individual way of feeling, thinking, and expressing itself, and endowing them all with such a personality that he makes them pass for real people. He carries the mystification so far as to insert the following note: "Various rumours are current with regard to the undersigned brotherhood. Since we are still obliged to maintain silence with regard to the reason for our incognito, we beg Herr Schumann (in case he is known to the honourable management) kindly to lend us his name from time to time. Signed: The Davidsbündler." To which Schumann replied that he consented with pleasure. "At present," he

writes to Töpken, "we are living a romance such as was perhaps never to be found in a book!" And how could the public fail to be deceived? A few of the *Bündler* were real people and imaginary characters at the same time. He describes the two protagonists, Florestan and Eusebius, as follows: "Florestan is one of those rare musicians who have, as it were, divined in advance all that was coming, all that is new and extraordinary, to whom the strange no longer seems strange the moment after it has appeared, who immediately make what is exceptional their own property; Eusebius, on the other hand, is exalted, yet at the same time calm, plucks flower after flower, grasps things with more difficulty, but more surely, and enjoys things more rarely, but more slowly and for a longer time; moreover, he works harder, and his style of piano-playing is more thoughtful, but also more delicate and technically more perfect than that of Florestan." And these protagonists were none other than Schumann's two souls, the tumultuous and the solitary, the exuberant and the reserved, the energetic and the dreamy, the ὄξυς (lively) and the κόσμος (ordered). Similarly, Meister Raro is at the same time a synthesis of Eusebius and Florestan and Friedrich Wieck. Others are real people, disguised under pseudonyms: *Walt,* the pianist Rakemann; *Julius,* the pianist Knorr; *Serpentin,* Schumann's colleague and future rival, C. Banck; *Fritz Friedrich,* the painter Lyser; *Jonathan,* no doubt Schunke; *Jean-qui-rit,* Stephen Heller; *H. Hanbüchen,* Sobolewski; *Saint-Diamond,* Zuccalmaglio, etc. Besides these, there were also friends to whom he assigned a role in his criticisms,

making them members of the brotherhood without previously asking their permission: *Felix Meritis* is Mendelssohn; *Chiara, Chiarina,* and *Zilia* are Clara Wieck; *Aspasia* and *Eleonore,* Henriette Voigt; *Maria,* the singer Henrietta Grabau. And lastly, all musicians are included in the society, which is infinite, since, though they never received its diploma, Beethoven and Mozart were proclaimed *Bündler* in the past, just as Berlioz was in the present.

The most accurate idea that one can give of the Davidsbündler is to compare them to the *Carneval,* which, with the *Études symphoniques,* formed his musical output during the "memorable year." They are "masks" which the poet-musician calls up before us by words, as he did in *Carneval* by sounds, masks which perform their glides, their steps, their capers and somersaults before the reader, as they did before the hearer in *Carneval*—casting a gleam of illusion over reality and lending a reflection of reality to what is illusion, till, carried away by the spirit of the dance, and carrying us with them on their wings, they soar upwards and transport us into the misty realm of dreams.

The Romance of Schumann's Marriage

The Struggle for Clara[1]

Leipzig–Vienna–Leipzig
(1835–40)

THIS EXAMINATION OF SCHUMANN'S CRITICAL work, from 1835 to 1845, has caused me to forestall the remaining years of his life, to which I shall now return. We had reached the beginning of 1835, at the point when, owing to the illness of Knorr, Wieck's constant absences, and the death of Schunke, Schumann was obliged to assume the whole responsibility for editing the *Zeitschrift,* the publication of which he had taken away from Hartmann and entrusted to J. A. Barth. But its success was so great that the work was a pleasure to him. He was passing through one of those periods of happy stimulation when the future appeared to him in the most brilliant hues, when his creative power was so intense that, in spite of his absorbing occupations, he was able to write the two sonatas, in F sharp minor and G minor, besides a number of small pieces; and when his whole heart was expanding like a flower in the sunshine of friendship and love.

We shall first speak of his friendships. A great event had taken place which was revolutionizing the musical

[1] From this chapter onwards, I have closely followed Clara's diary and correspondence with Robert, of which B. Litzmann has given us the essential parts in his great work *Clara Schumann* (3 vols., Leipzig, 1903).

life of Leipzig: Mendelssohn had been appointed conductor of the Gewandhaus concerts. Fortune had lavished her choicest gifts upon this noble young man —physical beauty, distinction both of person and of family, wealth, and a precocious talent which had met with universal recognition and applause. But, instead of resting content to enjoy them in idleness and use them for the enjoyment of others, he had learnt to be worthy of them and extend their scope by hard study and persevering work, and had become the leader of the younger romantics—though his well-balanced temperament had tinged his romanticism with a serenity, lofty intellectualism, and harmony which were quite classic. Schumann had scarcely caught sight of him and heard him play and conduct when his heart went out towards him, like that of all Leipzig, only more unreservedly. Let us turn once more to the two "ecstatic letters *(Schwärmbriefe)*" printed among his collected critical works, and written after the first two concerts conducted by Mendelssohn in October 1835. "What a joy to see Felix Meritis anticipating every spiritual subtlety of the works with his eyes, from the most delicate to the most powerful, borne onwards, as it were, by the general effect of the piece as on a tide of exaltation, unlike those conductors who seem to be thrashing the score, the orchestra, and the public alike with their baton. . . . You should have heard Meritis play Mendelssohn's Concerto in G minor. He sat down to the piano, as ingenuously as a child, and one by one he subdued all hearts and drew them after him in a body; and when he removed his spell, all one knew was that

one had been floating over some divine island of Greece and had come down, safe and sound, in the Firlenz hall [Leipzig]. 'You are a master who is very happy in his art,' said Florestan to Meritis when the latter had finished."[2] Schumann never lost this exalted regard for Mendelssohn, both as man and as artist, either while he was living near the young master or after they were separated by circumstances: Mendelssohn was "a regular god," "a diamond fallen from heaven," "the first musician of his age"; and Schumann said that he would "always look up to him as to a lofty mountain-peak." The composer of *St. Paul* does not seem, however, to have responded to these effusions. All that he really esteemed in Schumann was his bold and vigorous critical faculty. As for his compositions, he neither cared for them nor thoroughly understood them: the perfume which arose from them was too heady, the sensibility which stirred in them was too quivering, the forms in which Schumann delighted were on too miniature a scale, as compared with Felix Meritis's own serenity, healthy intellect, and predilection for ample developments. Schumann conceived the same feelings of admiration and affection at first sight for Chopin, whose nascent genius he had praised so highly in his first critical essay. But though the gentle Chopin welcomed this affectionate admiration, he too did not reciprocate it: he did not care either for Schumann's Sonata in F sharp major or for his *Carneval,* in which he saw nothing to praise but "the charming mise-en-scène," and which did not seem to him to be music. And side by side with these famous

[2] Op. cit., pp. 136–7, 139–40.

figures, who were not so fond of Schumann as he was of them, there were his young colleagues on the *Zeitschrift,* for whom he had a silent but devoted affection, and who continued to meet at the Kaffeebaum, where they kept late hours and were not sparing of their ritual libations—which were, indeed, too copious for Schumann's health.

But it was not friendship, it was love that filled the end of the year 1835, as well as the years between this and 1840. We are now at the beginning of what I may call Schumann's "nuptial romance," the only romance which his proud, chaste soul was capable of experiencing, but which he experienced deeply.

We have already witnessed the birth and development of a brotherly affection between Robert and Clara. We have seen how, even during his brief romance with Ernestine, Robert was constantly taking refuge in Clara's affection, as in a refreshing retreat, while, for her part—or so, at least, she was to write later—child as she was, she had been conscious from the first that her feeling for the older companion of her studies, games, and walks was one of love. And we are bound to believe her; for not only was she jealous, but she tried to revenge herself for the "abandonment" of her lover by accepting the attentions of others—though still in a childish fashion. During her short visit to Leipzig in March 1834, she made the acquaintance of Banck, a young musician who, as we have seen, became one of the staff of the *Zeitschrift;* she went on a concert tour with him during the winter of 1834–5 and became attached to him. On the other hand, she wrote to her stepmother that she had

fallen in love with the young violoncellist Müller at Brunswick. By April she was back at Leipzig. "How clearly I still remember the first afternoon after our return from Hamburg!" she wrote four years later. "You came into the room and barely greeted me, in a cursory way. Then I went to Auguste, who was with us, and said, tearfully: 'There is nobody whom I love as I do him, and he has not so much as looked at me!'" But she was mistaken. He had looked at her closely, for he noticed at the first glance the transformation which had taken place in her since her departure. "I still remember," he wrote in turn on February 11, 1838, "how I saw you again for the first time at midday. You seemed to me taller and stranger—you were no longer a child with whom I should have liked to play and laugh—you spoke so sensibly, and in your eyes I saw a deep, secret gleam of love. You know what happened after that. I set Ernestine free—I could not help it."

And indeed, as Ernestine's image faded from his memory, a gentle face became more and more deeply graven upon it. His heart, which had been partly awakened by the episode with the young foreigner, was ripe for passion. The brotherly feeling which he had felt for Clara became surer and more ardent, it increased to fever-heat and was transformed into love. "Among all the vintage festivities and heavenly delights," he wrote to her in August from Zwickau, "an angelic head is always peeping through, which is as like as two peas to a certain Clara of my acquaintance. . . . You know how fond I am of you." And the words "angelic head" do not seem exaggerated if we

are to believe the portrait of her traced by Robert's master Heinrich Dorn. "In 1831 my Clara was an exquisite schoolgirl *(Backfisch)*; her slender figure, her rosy cheeks, her delicate, white, child's hands, her masses of rich brown hair, her intelligent eyes, full of fire—everything about her was seductive. . . ." In October, Schumann evoked her image in the first of his ecstatic letters: "Then I thought of you, dear Chiara, the pure and bright." And on November 25 he went to see her in the evening just before her departure for Zwickau, where she was to give a concert; she showed him out on to the landing, and here their lips met for the first time. "When you kissed me for the first time," wrote Clara, "I thought that I should faint. Everything turned black before my eyes and I could scarcely hold the lamp that was to light you." The enraptured Robert joined her at Zwickau, where he kissed her again. "It will be three years tomorrow," he recalls, "since I kissed you at Zwickau one evening. Never shall I forget that kiss. You were too sweet that evening. And afterwards, at the concert, you simply could not look at me, you, Clara, you in your blue dress." It was at this moment that he resolved to write to Ernestine to break off their engagement. In order to allay Clara's scruples, he told her that Ernestine was engaged to another, which was not true. He afterwards admitted that his behaviour to Ernestine had not been irreproachable. "I am well aware, and I cannot conceal from myself," he wrote on October 23, 1838, from Vienna, "that a wrong has been done, but the harm would have been greater—vast, indeed—if it had come to a union between her and me. Sooner or

CLARA WIECK

later my old love and attachment to you would have revived, and then what misery it would have been! All three of us would have been most horribly unhappy. Thus she was the victim of circumstances and I do not in the least conceal from myself that it was my fault. But we will do all we can to make up for it, Clara. Ernestine knows quite well that it was she who ousted you from my heart first, that I loved you before knowing her. . . . Ernestine used often to write to me: 'I always thought that you could not love anybody but Clara, and I still think so.' She saw more clearly than I did."

On returning to Leipzig, Robert passed "blissful hours in Clara's arms" at Wieck's house in the evening. And so the love which inflamed these two young hearts could not be hidden for long. Wieck soon noticed what had been hatched behind his back. But, though he was fond of Robert and thought highly of his talent, his affection and esteem did not go so far as to make him ready to give him his daughter; he dreamt of a more secure and brilliant future for Clara, and, most of all, he was bent on keeping the goose that laid the golden eggs to himself. And so, to put an end to what might be no more than a flirtation, he sent Clara to Dresden in January 1836 and forbade all correspondence between the lovers. But they naturally found ways of eluding his Argus eye and wrote to each other frequently.

In the midst of these emotions Robert received the news of his mother's death. It was a heavy blow to him. Though at the opening of his career his mother had opposed his vocation, yet, since writing to give

her consent to it, she had shown herself the tenderest of friends and the most understanding of confidantes to her son. In his bereavement he now sought refuge with the girl who was in future to take the place of all other ties. He took advantage of one of Wieck's absences to go and see Clara, from February 7 to 11, and on the 13th, after a tender farewell, he wrote her a letter thrilling with deep love and confidence in the future, from the office of the post-house from which he was to set out from Zwickau to settle the business connected with his mother's estate. "How near you are to me, my dear, dear Clara! So near that I feel as if I could clasp you in my arms. Formerly when I was strongly attached to anyone, I could express it all in graceful words; now I can do so no longer. And if you did not know it, I could not tell you. Do you, too, love me with all your heart; do you hear? I make great demands, for I give much." Her gentle form shone through all the sadness of the occasion, and as he gazed at it, he was able to bear all his suffering more easily. He had no fear of the future, he said; no doubt he would have to work hard to win her, but she would always be working too, she would bear things with him, work with him, and share his joys and sorrows. "Perhaps your father will not withhold his hand, if I ask for his blessing. . . . There are travellers asleep beside me. Outside it is sleeting and snowing. But I mean to bury myself in a corner, hide my head in a pillow, and think of nothing but you."

Unfortunately, Wieck had no intention of going back on his refusal. On hearing of the meeting between the two young people he flew into a rage and

wrote Robert the first of his "terrible" letters, full of insults and vituperation: the young man was definitely forbidden to hold any communication with the Wiecks. None the less, the lover was not discouraged. He tried to communicate with his beloved through one of his colleagues on the *Zeitschrift*, during a concert tour which she made in Silesia at the end of February. But the friend seems to have been too timid to accept the commission, and so the separation was complete. "My stars are in strange confusion," he wrote to his sister-in-law Therese. "Things have reached such a pitch that either I shall never be able to speak to Clara again, or she must become entirely mine."

It was the former of these suppositions that seemed likely to be realized. Clara returned to Dresden, indeed, on August 8. But Robert did not succeed in reopening communication with her. On the one hand, Wieck had overawed her by threatening to kill her lover if he tried to approach her again. On the other hand, Clara was constantly travelling, and did not return to Leipzig for any length of time until May 1837. For fifteen months the lovers could not exchange a word or a letter. In vain did Robert lay plans for getting near to her. He dedicated his Sonata in F sharp minor to her, his "unique cry of passion" for his beloved. But the cry met with no answering echo. And so-called friends worked in league with Wieck to widen the breach between the two lovers. Robert's colleague Carl Banck, who had become Clara's singing-master, took advantage of the rupture to worm himself into the girl's good graces and detach Robert from her, by persuading him that she no longer cared for him.

Perhaps at first she only lent herself to Banck's manœuvres in order to hear her absent lover still spoken of by somebody who was constantly in contact with him. But little by little she seems to have begun to take pleasure in them. She wrote to Banck while she was on tour, and on her return it was he and his mother who came to meet her. It was to him that she complained that Schumann, who had spoken very kindly of her *Caprices en forme de valse* (op. 8), her *Valse romantique* (op. 4), and her *Soirées musicales* (op. 5), had written nothing about her piano concerto (op. 7), but had merely allowed one of his contributors to say a few not very gracious words about it. When she returned from her tour, the relations between her and Banck became more intimate. At this point old Wieck, who had no doubt encouraged the flirtation as an antidote to her love for Robert, saw that matters were moving too quickly, and, being even less anxious to give his daughter to Banck than to Schumann, intervened so energetically that the suitor was alarmed and promised to leave Leipzig on the spot and give up all correspondence with Clara. In vain did she send her maid to ask him to resist her father. Banck refused to see the maid, dropped everything, and departed for Rudolfstadt. Schumann got wind of the affair and, on May 17, 1837, revenged himself by a satire which, it must be admitted, was as heavy as it was offensive. It was called: "Report to Jean-qui-rit [Stephen Heller's pseudonym] on the Editor's Last Art-History Ball." The heroine of the story was the co-editress Ambrosia (who was supposed to represent Clara), who talked about Chopin

and romanticism with intolerable affectation, "hammered out Liszt's waltzes rather than understood them," and darted amorous glances at Florestan, "since there was no other man available"; and the hero was a Herr de Knapp (who was certainly meant for Banck), "with his face, which is a flagrant proclamation of scandal, his baldness, and his nose, which is positively unmoral." [3]

While admitting that this mode of expressing a lover's pique quite oversteps the bounds of propriety and good taste, we may point out, as an extenuating circumstance, the fact that, as Schumann afterwards told his wife, he was desperate and had lost his balance. At first he had plunged feverishly into his work. While devoting all his energies to the *Zeitschrift,* he had written his Sonata in F sharp minor and his *Phantasie,* both of which, and especially the latter, which is the masterpiece among his piano works, are throbbing with unsatisfied passion and desperate appeals to his absent love. Besides, no doubt in order to forget, he led such a disordered life that his faithful landlady threatened to give him notice and only consented to keep him on receiving a promise that he would mend his ways. There was an endless stream of visitors to his room at the Rothes Haus and the Kaffeebaum. On November 15, 1836 he wrote to his sister-in-law Therese, who took his mother's place as his chief correspondent and became the affectionate confidante of his doings, that Chopin, Lipinski, Mendelssohn, the singer Henriette Carl, Ludwig Berger, William Sterndale Bennett, the violinist David, and young Goethe

[3] *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker,* Reclam ed., I, 50.

had all visited him. "To be equal to the demands of one's age and of events," he wrote, "to help things on, to struggle and remain independent . . . often makes my head swim. On the other hand, I receive so many kindnesses from people that I feel I can never requite them. . . . In the mortal anguish which often seizes me, I have none but you who seems to take me by the arm and protect me."

His position with regard to Clara was responsible for most of this "mortal anguish." This time the lovers were no longer separated by Wieck's tyranny alone. Each thought that the other was false, so that they were becoming estranged without being able to detach themselves from each other altogether. Clara imagined that Robert had abandoned her as he had abandoned Ernestine: she entered into correspondence with the young girl and questioned her about her unhappy experience, which shows that her secret thoughts went out towards him whom she believed to be faithless. And during her concert tour she was in such a state of mind that Wieck thought she had better give up her career as a professional pianist, and thought of sending her to Baden-Baden for a rest. For his part, Schumann tried to put a good face upon the situation. At first, on hearing that Clara had become entirely estranged from him, "he lost consciousness and felt quite crushed." Then he rallied his pride and retorted to Banck that he was glad to get rid of her, since she had shown how little she was worth. But, recovering hope, he added that she would take care not to show those around her what she was really feeling. "The darkest moment," he wrote to Clara on December 31,

1838, "when I had absolutely no news of you and wanted to force myself to forget you, was about a year ago, up till February. At that time we must have become estranged. I had given up hope. But suddenly the old pain broke out again—I wrung my hands—and often at night I cried to God: 'Only let this one night pass by without my losing my reason.' I even thought that I should find the announcement of your betrothal in the newspapers—then something took me by the scruff of the neck and seemed to crush me to the earth, so that I cried aloud—next I tried to cure myself by forcing myself to fall in love with a woman who had already half entangled me." And in June 1837 for a moment he again had the idea of revenging himself for Clara's indifference by letting his choice fall on another.

Who was the woman to whom Schumann alludes? We have no idea. It occurred to me at first that it might be that Miss Anna Robena Laidlaw to whom our composer dedicated his *Phantasiestücke,* in whose society he spent a great deal of time precisely at the end of June 1837, and about whom he wrote to Clara, on November 29, 1837, that he believed she "bore his image in her heart."

Miss Robena Laidlaw was a young English pianist whose parents had settled at Königsberg, where she worked with Robert Müller; she next studied in London with Heinrich Herz and in Berlin with Ludwig Berger, and gave concerts in Berlin, London, Riga, and Warsaw. Having been appointed court pianist to Frederica, Duchess of Cumberland, she had come to Leipzig in June, chiefly with the object of making

Schumann's acquaintance. She went to see him the day after her arrival. He welcomed her in the most friendly way, interested himself in her first concert, inserted a notice of it in the *Zeitschrift,* in which he praised her highly, asking her in return to interest herself in his compositions. He saw her frequently, showed her and her mother round Leipzig and the surrounding country, gave dinners and luncheons for her, and presented her with bouquets of roses—in short, he paid marked attentions to the young artist, who was extremely pretty. But these festive days lasted only a fortnight. On August 9, after her departure, Schumann wrote to her, assuring her of the charming memories which her visit had left him and informing her that he had dedicated his *Phantasiestücke* to her, in which she would find "the whole of the Rosenthal [a favourite suburban resort of the Leipzigers] and its romantic associations." He added: "I have not yet received your portrait. You will not forget it, will you? . . . You cannot think how much I am interested in everything that concerns you. I am well, *I am even happy.*" On September 8 he wrote again, thanking her for some flowers and the portrait which she had sent him. But the portrait was an utter failure. "Where can one find in it anything of your eyes, as they really are, or of the blue velvet spencer? . . . Really, I have a far higher opinion of you than of the lithograph." We also know that the two young people had gone to several concerts together, that they had discussed E. T. A. Hoffmann, Scott, and Sterndale Bennett, that the young girl considered Schumann "every inch a gentleman," and that he seemed to her

to be "the type of German good nature and sincerity." And that is all. Though the tone of his first letter was rather ardent, her opinion of him was not particularly passionate. The relations between them were exactly those which used to exist, and still do nowadays, between German girls and German young men who are thrown together by chance: there is not a trace of French gallantry or Anglo-Saxon flirtation, but the feeling is one of calm affection, of pleasure at being together and at telling one another so.[4]

So Miss Laidlaw was not the woman who had "half entangled" Schumann, and it was not this charming episode, which does not seem to have left any deep impression on him, that could turn him aside from the great love of his life. And now this love, dormant for a time, was about to revive, and the passion which, in spite of all their misunderstandings, had continued to smoulder in these two young hearts was to blaze up again. Clara, who had gone with her parents to stay with one of their friends, "Major" Serre, at Maxen, near Dresden, for a rest, was recalled to Leipzig for a concert which took place on August 13. She had included in her program Florestan and Eusebius's Sonata in F sharp minor, and Robert came to hear his work and see the player once more. It was, as she told him later, her appeal to him in the language and through the sounds that he had himself created and dedicated to the woman he loved. "Did you not understand," she wrote afterwards, "that I played it because I knew no other way of showing you a little

[4] With regard to this episode, see F. G. Jansen in *Die Grenzboten*, 1895, pt. 4, and *Zeitschrift der Internationalen Musik-Gesellschaft*, Vol. III, 1901–2.

of what was going on within me? I might not do it in secret, so I did it in public. Do you think my heart was not trembling? . . . I was unspeakably miserable that day, and, as it were, at odds with the world. We went for a walk afterwards, but I saw neither trees, flowers, nor meadows, I saw only you—and yet I did not see you, I was not allowed to see you." And to this indirect appeal she joined a direct and quite unmistakable appeal to the senses. At this point it was Clara who made the first advances and took the decisive steps, showing herself to be indeed the "girl of strong character *(starkes Mädchen)*" that Robert admired in her. By Wieck's orders the lovers had been forced in June 1836 to return the letters which they had written to each other. But now, through the agency of a mutual friend, E. A. Becker of Freiburg, who had assured her of Robert's fidelity, she asked him to send her back his letters.

At last she had given the sign that he had waited for in painful suspense, and contact was restored for good between the two who had been so harshly separated. Schumann at once responded to the invitation, though so strongly had mistrust taken root in him that he prefaced his reply with the following words, written on the envelope: "After long days of silence, hope, and despair, may these lines be received with the same love as of old. If it no longer exists, I beg that this letter may be returned to me unopened." Its contents were as follows: "August 13, 1837. Are you still true and *firm?* Unshakably though I believe in you, the highest spirit ends by doubting itself when one hears absolutely nothing of what one holds dearest in the

world. And this is what you are to me. I have thought it all over a thousand times, and everything says to me: it must come to pass if only we mean it and act. Let me know, by a simple 'Yes,' whether you are prepared to hand your father a letter from me on your very birthday (September 13). He is well disposed towards me at present and will not reject me if you still plead for me. . . . Above all, keep this idea firmly fixed in your mind: 'It must come to pass if only we mean it and act.' . . . Do not forget the 'Yes,' then. I must have this assurance first, before I can think of anything more. All that I say here comes from the depths of my soul, and I sign it with my name. Robert Schumann."

A year later Clara wrote to Robert describing the feelings aroused in her by these adjurations. "The letter was cold, grave, and yet so beautiful, so thoroughly earnest, that it made me ineffably happy; and yet, at the same time, the superscription, asking me to return the envelope unopened if I were not the same as I had been two years ago, gave me pain. You were a little harsh, after all, and doubted my love greatly, which I had *never* done, even when I had apparent reason to do so." Her answer was as follows: "Leipzig, August 15, 1837 [the real date was the 14th, as Litzmann points out]. Do you only ask for a simple 'Yes'? Such a little word—and yet so important—how could a heart so full of ineffable love as mine fail to pronounce this little word with all its soul? I do so, and my inmost heart whispers it to you for ever. Could I but describe the sufferings of my heart, and all the tears that I have shed! No! Perhaps Fate intends that

we should soon speak to each other again, and then . . . Your plan seems to me hazardous, but a loving heart recks little of danger. And so once again I say: 'Yes.' Can God intend to make my eighteenth birthday a day of grief? Ah, that would be too cruel. I too have felt for long past that *it had to be*. Nothing on earth shall turn me aside and I will show my father that a young heart too is capable of constancy."

Once the link was reforged, the lovers found means to prevent its severance. Clara won over Nanny, her "faithful and discreet" maid. It was she who, after this first, firm letter, brought a second and more impassioned one. "My longing to see you, to talk with you, is indescribable. If an opportunity occurs, I will let you know. This morning I was firmly resolved, I meant to go to you, my spirit had already flown on before me, but suddenly I was held fast—I saw your window, a tear sprang to my eyes—such a hot, sad tear—and I returned home with my heart full. My firm faith in your love now makes me happy—I sent you my heart, my all, with the ring." Robert had enclosed the fateful letter, so that she could read it before it was handed to her father, and she now returned it to him with the assurance that it would make a good impression on her father, and deplored his absence. And at last, thanks to Nanny's connivance, they met on September 9. This interview was not all that the lovers had hoped, as often happens after a long absence, when there is so much to say that one does not know where to begin, so that one is either silent or talks about trifles. "At our first meeting," wrote Clara in January 1838, "you were so stiff and cold; I, too,

should have liked to show more feeling, but I was too agitated; I could hardly control my emotion. . . . The moon shone so beautifully upon your face when you took off your hat and passed your hand over your brow; I felt the greatest happiness that I had ever felt. I had found again what was dearest to me."

On September 13 Clara handed her father an envelope containing three letters from Schumann, one to him, the second to his wife, and the third to herself. He opened his heart to Wieck with entire confidence. He had never, he said, been so sure of his future as at that moment. So far as it was possible to foresee, he was assured against all material difficulties, he had splendid plans and strength to work and hoped to achieve all that they had a right to expect of him, "a young heart filled with enthusiasm by all that is noble," honoured and loved by many people. "But what is all this in comparison with the pain of being separated from her towards whom all these efforts tend and who returns my love truly and deeply? . . . You have tested me for eighteen months, as severely as Fate. How angry I might justly be with you! I had wounded you deeply, but you have made me expiate it. Put me to the test again for an equal time. Perhaps, if you do not demand the impossible, my strength will be equal to your demands; perhaps I shall be able to regain your confidence. You know that where important matters are concerned, I am tenacious. If you then find me trustworthy, true, and manly, give your blessing to this union of souls, which lacks nothing but your parental sanction to be a supremely happy one. It is no momentary excitement, it is not passion, it is

nothing merely external that binds me to Clara by every fibre of my being; it is the deep conviction that rarely has there been a union in which all the conditions of life are so propitiously harmonious; it is this noble girl, so worthy of honour, who spreads happiness everywhere and is a guarantee of ours." And he asked Wieck for the answer which seemed due to his position, talent, and character, adding a request for an interview. "They will be solemn moments until I know your decision—solemn as the interval between the lightning-flash and the thunder-clap during a storm, when one does not know whether it will pass by destroying or bringing blessing. I implore you with all the force of which an agonized and loving heart is capable: Bring us blessing; be a friend once more to one of your oldest friends, and the best of fathers to the best of children. . . ."

A fine letter, whose eloquence and emotion spring straight from a deep and sincere heart, in which it is not the voice of passion, but of reason "pure and simple," that is heard. Yet it made no impression on the obstinate man's resistance. His answer, according to Schumann's account, was "so confused, so ambiguous in its refusals and concessions," that he did not know what to do and felt depressed and incapable of thought or action. He next saw Wieck, and described the interview to Clara as follows, on September 18: "My interview with your father was terrible. Such coldness, such ill will, such confusion, such contradictions—he has found a new way to annihilate one, he buries the knife in one's heart up to the hilt. . . . And what now, my dear Clara? I do not know what to do. . . .

Above all, be forearmed and do not let yourself be sold one day. . . . I trust you with all my heart, and that is what sustains me—but you will have to be very strong, stronger than you have any idea. Your father himself said the terrible words: that '*nothing should move him.*' You have everything to fear from him: *he will compel you by force* if he does not succeed by craft. You have everything to fear! I am so dead, so crushed today that I can hardly conceive a single good idea; even your image has faded away, so that I can hardly think of your eyes. I was not so poor-spirited as to give you up, but I was so indignant, so outraged in my most sacred feelings. . . . If I had only a word from you. You must tell me what I ought to do. . . . To be unable even to see each other! We could do so, he said, but not at your house or at mine, only in the presence of everybody, for everyone to stare at. How chilling all that is! How it rankles! We might also write to each other when you are travelling. That was all he would concede. . . . In vain do I seek excuses for your father. . . . In vain do I seek for any nobler, deeper reason for his refusal—such, for instance, as the fear that if you promised your hand too soon, your art might suffer, or that you are too young, etc. Believe me, it is nothing of the sort; he would throw you to the first suitor who presents himself, provided that he had money and titles enough. Besides, his highest idea is concerts and tours; it is for this that he lets you be bled, and destroys my powers while I am striving to do something fine in the world. . . . Though I am weak today and have given pain to your father, you at least are not unkind to me. And indeed it is I who am

right. But let us keep our eyes bravely fixed on the goal. Your goodness must be equal to everything now, and if you cannot achieve your ends by that, then it must be by your strength. I can do little but remain silent, any fresh appeal to your father would be sure to bring me a fresh humiliation. . . . Ah! my head swims. I could laugh for very anguish. This state of affairs cannot last long—my nature cannot endure it. Comfort me, O God, lest I perish in despair!" And on the same afternoon he added the following postscript to this long lament: "Nothing is lost, I think, but we have also gained but little. I am annoyed at having written, now. It would have been better in eight or ten weeks' time. It is most important that we should proceed calmly and with circumspection. . . . When I asked him if he did not think that we should be the happiest people in the world, he granted that—and yet it was impossible to get any further. Next he said that we should need much more than we think, and named an enormous sum.—Yet, I said, we have as much as a hundred of the best families here. . . . His reply was that you would often weep in secret if we did not give great receptions, etc. Is this true, Clara? . . . If he pushes things to extremes—that is to say, if he does not grant his consent within eighteen months or two years—we shall have to assert our rights. . . . *And then the authorities will marry us.* Heaven grant that it may not come to that. . . . Let me have a few words soon—soothing, kind words. You are present before me more clearly and beautifully than on the morning when I wrote the last letter. . . . And before I take leave of you today, my beloved child, swear

to me once more, by your eternal salvation, that you have the courage to bear the trials which are inflicted upon us bravely, even as I take my oath this very moment, raising two fingers of my right hand. I will never give you up! Have confidence in me!"

Clara replied, and, although Schumann wrote on the margin of her letter: "Read on September 26, amid a thousand joys," it was not altogether what we should have expected as an answer to her lover's letter, so heart-rending and almost alarming in the derangement and distress that it reveals. "Do you still doubt me? I forgive you for it, weak girl that I am! Yes, weak; but I have a strong soul, a heart that is firm and unchanging. Let this suffice to dispel all your doubts. Till now, I have always been very unhappy; but only write a few soothing words below these lines and I will go out into the wide world without anxiety. I have promised father to be gay and to live a few years longer for art and society. You will hear many things about me, many doubts will arise in your mind when you hear this thing or that, but say to yourself at such times: 'She is doing all this for me.' If ever you were capable of wavering, then—you would break a heart which has only loved once." Intoxicated with ecstasy, Robert refused to send back this note as she asked him, saying "one does not return such heavenly words as these." And he asked her to call him *du,* as she must sometimes have done in her thoughts. He wrote to her again on October 3. Was he to write to her and her father during her coming tour? He did not know what line of action to follow. He advised her always to keep Banck at a distance, as one who

"troubled the purest water." And he implored her to have confidence in him, whatever might happen; for it might happen that his letters to her were intercepted or his character blackened. "The world is ill-natured, but we mean to proceed blamelessly. . . . Three hours from now I am to see you. I am filled with a sort of dread. It is the last time—perhaps for ever."

And so they met. On the following day Clara commented on the meeting as follows: "Ah! how quickly yesterday evening passed by; I had still so much to say to you. I hover constantly between tears and laughter. . . . My hand is trembling and my heart beats so hard, but every heart-beat goes out towards you. What more can I say? May an almighty and merciful God whisper to you constantly what I feel so deeply, but am powerless to express." And she appointed another meeting for the evening. He saw her again for the last time on October 8, at a concert which she was giving at the Gewandhaus. And he wrote to her on the 9th: "Your 'Good-night' yesterday, your glance when we saw each other at the door! Never will I forget them! 'And this Clara,' I said to myself, 'this Clara is yours—she is yours, yet you cannot go to her, you cannot even press her hand.' . . . I was dead and in bliss at the same time, dropping with weariness, and almost every drop of my blood was a surge of fever. What will be the end of all this? Cousin Pfundt [a musician related to Wieck] brought me another 'heart-felt' message from you—after which I slept more peacefully than on the previous nights. But believe me—*I am ill, very, very ill; one blow and*

I should collapse. What is it that suddenly deprives me of all strength to work? If I improvise at the piano, it turns into chorales; if I write, I have no ideas —one thought alone I should like to portray everywhere in great letters and chords." Clara replied on the 11th. Her stepmother was seconding her father in his attempts to persuade her that Schumann was incapable of fidelity. She did not believe a word of it: "My confidence is unshakable. Who knows what brilliant prospects may yet open out before me? But I renounce them all joyfully, for what use would all the riches in the world be to me with a broken heart? Love alone can make me happy. I live for you alone and I want to give you all. . . . And now I must part from what is dearest to me. Farewell, then—there will not be a minute when I shall not be thinking of you." And Robert wrote on the back of this letter: "I am dead and in bliss at the same time. Your letter of yesterday, my rage with your father, our farewell, the whole of the past, your goodness, your nobility—how rich I am! But if you were ever to leave me, it would all collapse. Do not leave me!" And on the same day: "I would write and think no more; but as you wept on my heart, then, Clara, you showed me both heaven and hell yesterday. Do I love you, then? And you me? Do not abandon me, you who are like no other woman. I cling to you with all my strength; if you fail, all is over with me!"

And now Clara was gone, and Robert separated from her for eight months. On the very day after her departure he was already writing to her, as though he did not mean to let distance place any obstacle in the

way of their love. "I kiss you for your last letter—how it has strengthened and uplifted me! How happy you shall be one day with me! Yesterday evening at nine o'clock I thought of you—your idea of a fixed hour is a beautiful one. For the first time for many weeks past I wept aloud—and I felt as though you must have known it—and I had an unspeakably lovely feeling that you were near." Then followed a silence. It was broken by a letter of Clara's from Prague, dated November 3. She complained of having heard nothing from him for three weeks. She pitied her father, who was in despair at the thought that he was to lose her one day. "I feel that I have a duty towards him, and yet I cannot help loving you so infinitely. He thinks I might forget you. Forget you? The very word makes me shudder. He does not know the strength of a loving heart." Robert replied the day after receiving her letter. It was he, he said, who was angry with her for having been so long in writing to him; for she knew how to send him news, whereas he did not know how to communicate with her (Clara had suggested the poste restante, at which he was to address her as B.C.D.E.). He would not tell her how he had suffered during these recent days. He had received a letter from Wieck saying that, rather than allow two fine artists to condemn themselves to a wretched life, he would marry his daughter to someone else in a hurry. He could not reply to this, he could have nothing to do with such a man. Was Clara remaining firm? The last time he had seen her, she had said things which she had better have left unsaid. "Are you not happy to possess me? If you are not convinced that you are

going to be the happiest of women, if you are not sure —then it would be better to sever the bond between us, even now. I will give you back everything, even the ring. But if you are happy in my love, if it fills your whole heart, if you have considered everything —my faults, my tiresome ways—if the little that I can otherwise offer you can satisfy you, even if there are neither pearls nor diamonds—then, dear Clara, let everything remain as it is. Then I will never return anything, I will *never* release you from your engagements towards me, and I mean to make good *all* the claims which your consent and your ring give me a right to make. . . ." He was grieved to note that his beloved's hopes were wavering. He implored her never to show his letters to her father, pointing out that she was of as much importance to herself as her father, to whom she had already been the cause of so many joys, whereas Wieck had made her fairest years into years of suffering. He reminded her that in former days he himself had often called her his fiancée *("Braut")* in jest, and now he had to pay for this. . . . "It will cost us many a tear."

These melancholy forebodings were to prove only too well grounded. For the moment, however, Clara was full of courage and spirits. Why did he speak of wavering hopes? she replied. How could he write these words when she lived for a single hope alone, and a single thought inspired her every word and gesture? In order to dispel his fears she tried to make him smile. "As for the question of a marriage, that is of course very grave." Supposing that such a diamond were to come along and so dazzle her as to make her forget Eusebius

and Florestan, so that one day he read in the papers the announcement of the betrothal of Fräulein Clara Wieck to Lord Pearl Necklace or Lord Diamond Tiara! But, resuming her more serious tone, she continued: "Do you take me for a child, that I should let myself be led to the altar as though it were to school? When you *call* me a child, it sounds so sweet. . . . But if you *think* me one, then I rise up and say: 'You are wrong'" (Prague, evening of the 12th). And till the 24th, Clara's letters kept up the same note of gay constancy. She told him teasingly about her suitors, but she could find powerful language on occasion to express her longing. "And now good-night, the tea is icy cold, my room grows colder and colder, but I grow more and more ardent" (19th).

And how these letters must have warmed the heart of Robert, who lived for nothing but news of the traveller! He tried to console himself for her absence by pouring out his love and anguish in his compositions. He sent her the manuscript of the *Davidsbündler,* a collection of short, lyrical pieces, unique in their suffering grace, in which, illuminated by melody, the most secret fibres of a heart are revealed, from which twilight languors and flashes of burning fever draw music in turn.

But suddenly, amid all this happy exaltation, a mortal blow was dealt him by the hand which was dear to him above all others. On the eve of her departure, in a letter dated the 24th, Clara, that very Clara who had supported him so bravely and whose love had found such passionate expression, wrote to him as follows: "During these days I have again reflected a great

deal about my position, and I ought to draw your attention to one point. You have confidence in my ring? Ah, but that is only an external bond. Did not Ernestine, too, receive a ring from you, and, what is more, your word? And yet you broke the bond. So the ring is of no use at all. . . . I too have been thinking about the future, and that most seriously. One thing I must tell you: that I cannot become yours until conditions have become entirely changed. I want neither horses nor diamonds, I am happy indeed to be yours, but I want to lead a life free from anxiety and I realize that I should be unhappy if I could not give myself up entirely to art; but if one has material anxieties, that is impossible. My needs are great and I know that much is necessary for a well-ordered life. Ask yourself, then, Robert, whether you are in a position to provide me with a life free from care." And she mentions the possibility that she might be unable to write to him for four weeks. At Vienna she would only be able to write in the evenings, and she would not have many evenings to herself, since she would have to live for the great world. And she added the postscript: "You are not angry with me, are you? Oh, God, I simply do not know what I want, and I feel as though I had done you a wrong."

How would Robert be affected by this letter, which could not but fill him with despairing indignation, contempt, and disgust? Was it for a soul such as this that he was consumed with ardent longing? This was not the style of a young girl in love, or of an artist, but of a timid little bourgeoise, or, rather, of an old Philistine steeped in calculating selfishness. Yes, that

was it: it was the style of an old Philistine. Robert at once felt intuitively that Wieck had dictated this letter, trying to veil his own personality behind a few commonplace protestations of affection. Clara, tired out by incessant scenes, abandoned to the influence of a father to whom she had always been very much in subjection, and far from that of her lover, had been weak enough to consent to sign it. But she had done no more than sign it. None of it came from herself; all that was hers was the appeal in the postscript, a cry of indecision and remorse. She had been weak, certainly, but no more than weak. He himself would have to be doubly strong, strong both for himself and for her, strong enough to restrain his anger and let reason speak louder than indignation. He made the effort, and succeeded. When she wrote her letter, he replied, "the spirit of your father was standing by you dictating it." None the less, she had written it. She was right to think about their material position; they must arrive at a perfectly clear understanding about it. But, in the first place, why did she show no sign of this anxiety at the time of their meeting? Had she done so, he would not have spoken to her father. He had placed his position before her quite straightforwardly, and it was one with which many a pretty, nice girl would have been content. Perhaps she herself had thought so formerly—now she had changed her mind—he felt as though he were losing his reason. But all of a sudden he controlled himself and resumed the calm tone of a man of business. In view of the nature of his work, he continued, which could not be improvised at will, he could not increase his income

at once. It would increase naturally in time; but even then he did not know whether it would be enough for her needs. But, as he recalled the passage of her letter which he was answering, his bitterness and distress none the less found utterance. "Dear Clara, the last page of your letter brought me right back to earth, and I could embrace all Philistines. You might have expressed yourself more romantically, it is difficult for me to say a word in reply. . . . I repeat, it was your father's hand that guided the pen: the coldness of those lines has something murderous about it. . . . And the fact that you care so little for my ring. . . . Since yesterday I no longer care for yours and am not even wearing it. . . . I dreamt that I was passing deep water, an idea came into my head, and I threw the ring into it; then I was filled with infinite longing, so that I threw myself in after it. I will continue tomorrow; the blood is raging like fire in my head, and my eyes are dim with grief" (November 28). On the next day he resumed his letter, and forced himself to plead his cause so reasonably and at the same time with such loving exaltation that only a very dull mind and unfeeling heart could have resisted the force of its arguments and the fire of his passion. How could they torment themselves so much, he asked, about the few pieces of money they still lacked to balance their budget? If his own fortune were not enough, she would provide for the rest by what she earned. He would like to preserve his independent position a little while longer, to have a nice house not far from the city, and there, with her at his side, work and live in peace and perfect happiness. For her part, she would

naturally cultivate her art, but not so much for the public and for profit as for a few chosen persons and for their own happiness. A life of this kind would not call for great expenditure. It would be different if she wished to go into the great world. This, too, he would accept. In this case, they would leave home for three months. Clara would play abroad, in Paris and in London, and they would return richly laden with treasure. And if this twofold arrangement of their life ceased to tempt them, the day might well come when he would announce to her that, unknown to her, he had composed wonderful symphonies and other masterpieces, that he was burning to have them performed in distant lands, where she too should win garlands and laurels; and he would propose that they should settle in Paris. It would depend on her whether the plan were carried into effect, or he returned to his office to edit his review. And at the prospect of their life together, his heart melted: "Fair dreams, may nobody shatter you! Might I but be happy one day in the riches of your heart! These sleepless nights, full of suffering, that I have spent on your account, these griefs that find no relief in tears, must one day be requited by a merciful God." When he spoke in his letter of his rights over her, he continued, there was no question of rights in the legal sense. If she had found a man whom she loved and who was capable, in all probability, of making her completely happy, he would have raised no protest. He loved her too much for that, and he would have kept silence, even if he were to die for it. It was not true that it was he who had broken the bond with Ernestine: it was dissolved

by mutual consent. "With regard to all this dark side of my life, *I should like to divulge to you one day the deep secret of a grave psychical malady* from which I suffered in earlier days; but this would take a long time, and it includes the years beginning with the summer of 1833. But you must know it one day, and *then you will have the key to all my actions, to the whole of my strange nature.*" [5] And, having made this confession, he returned to herself. Her consent and the ring were undoubtedly morally binding upon her, and he called up her image before him, as she appeared to him, "so passionate and so reasonable, so distrustful and so kind, so loving and so prone to anger; in short, you are the whole of that Tuesday evening [the evening when they parted], with its moonlight, its tears of joy, and its abandonment of love." He was not very well satisfied with his own life during these last few weeks: "The separation from you, the pain caused me by so many injuries, often crushes my soul—and then I brood for hours on end and gaze at your portrait that hangs before me."

What were these injuries that were weighing on his mind, apart from the pains of love? No doubt the wounds inflicted on his self-love by the scant encouragement which his art received from the public, publishers, and critics. His music was not of the kind that commands popularity from the very first, that steals upon men's ears as though of its own accord. It could only be appreciated by those who had gone through deep and painful experiences, and it called for an effort which was repugnant to the rank and file of pianists,

[5] The italics are added by the author of this book.

accustomed to the facile, melodious trifles of Herz, Thalberg, and their like, or seduced by the tranquil charm of Mendelssohn's works. "The publishers will not listen to a word about me," he wrote sadly to Moscheles; and the critics shared in their disdain to such an extent that Schumann was obliged to do justice to his second book of *Studies on Paganini's Caprices* himself, since his fellow critics refused to do so. Clara wrote from Vienna that he had only a single admirer there. All the other musicians were his enemies. As soon as his name was mentioned, they were all furious. Naturally, this was on account of Döhler and Thalberg.

And now, at the very moment when Clara's mercenary, commercially minded letter had filled him with anguish, a great joy came to light up his sadness. In the Paris *Revue et gazette musicale* for November 12, 1837 (Vol. IV, no. 46) the great Liszt, that king among pianists, paid a most discerning tribute to his youthful talent. No doubt, Liszt wrote, Schumann's works "are not destined to meet with a popular success. But no superior intelligence can fail to perceive in them merit of a high order and rare beauties. Of all the compositions that have come to our notice, with the exception of Chopin's music, it is those of Schumann in which we have recognized the greatest individuality, novelty, and technical skill. In the *Impromptus* (op. 5) novel harmonic and rhythmical devices abound. In the Sonata (op. 11) the logic of ideas is worked out closely and with precision; this is the distinctive characteristic of Robert Schumann's works. But far from precluding originality, it calls it

forth and throws it into still stronger relief. Passion is revealed in his works indirectly and discreetly, but it is there, true, deep, and intensely moving. Schumann's music appeals to contemplative souls and serious minds, who are not content to remain on the surface of things, but know how to plunge into deep waters to seek the hidden pearl." The chief qualities of the Sonata, he said, were power, vitality, and richness. And in like manner the *Concert sans orchestre* (op. 14) was replete with richness and power. The opening of the *Allegro* and its melody were magnificent, and the Finale extremely interesting by reason of its harmonic resources.

We may imagine the effect produced upon Schumann's wounded spirit by this warm approbation of what he had striven to achieve, by so competent and authoritative a judge as Liszt. And to this joy was added yet another. Clara recovered her balance. Amid the triumphs that she was winning in Vienna—which drew tears of joy from old Wieck—she seemed to have forgotten her letter of August 24, which had produced so profound an upheaval in her lover, and which, as she admitted later, was the fruit "of a dark hour when—though she could hardly believe it—reason had seemed to exert its sway over her heart." She knew quite well that other girls—pretty, good girls—would be ready to share his life. "Two things alone I desire—your heart and your happiness. Could I be at peace knowing that your heart was full of anxiety on my behalf? Could I possibly entertain the mean desire to see you reduce your mind to a machine so that I might live according to my own pleasure?" And after

reverting timidly to her material cares—"I am aware that much is needed, even for a simple life, but I do not doubt that we shall find it all"—she abandoned herself to that exalted enthusiasm *(Schwärmerei)* of which she declared herself to be as capable as he was, exclaiming: "My confidence is firm. The ring repeats to me daily: 'faith, love, hope'" (December 6). And from this time onward her letters became more tender. Her father, it is true, continued to behave in his usual way. He had told Nanny, her faithful maid, that if Clara were to marry Robert, he would say on his very death-bed that she was unworthy to be his daughter, and every evening she heard him uttering imprecations upon her fiancé. But however she might suffer from Wieck's obduracy, henceforward she was sure of herself: never, never again would she allow herself to be browbeaten by her father (December 26).

Schumann floated in a sea of happiness, and the letters which he wrote to his beloved overflowed with tenderness. One would like to quote them all, they are so simple and affectionate, seeming, as it were, to twine themselves about her, delicately yet firmly, and cover her with caresses. They enable us to understand his music, which breathes out in melody all that is sincerest, deepest, and most intimate in his nature. On New Year's Eve he wrote as follows: "I have been sitting here for an hour. First I had meant to write to you the whole evening, but I can find no words— Now sit down by my side; throw your arms round me, and let us gaze once more into each other's eyes, silently and blissfully. Two beings love each other upon earth. . . . There are people singing a chorale in the distance—

do you know those two who love each other? How happy we are!—Clara, let us kneel down. Come, my Clara, I feel you beside me—our last word, side by side, to the Most High." Again, on January 2, 1838, he wrote: "I wept for joy at the thought that you are mine, and I often ask myself whether I am worthy of you." And on the 3rd: ". . . Could I but regain my piety, as in my childhood! I was such a happy child, when I used to pick out chords on the piano or gather flowers outdoors—I made the loveliest poems and prayers then. I was myself a poem and a prayer." And on the 4th he wrote that he was to receive a few thousand thalers from his brothers and was thinking of using them to build himself a little house (after taking expert advice). He could see it before him: "the dreamy darkness in one room, with flowers at the window, or the pale-blue room, with the grand piano and some engravings—we shall love each other so deeply and be faithful to each other—you will guide me gently when I need it—you will tell me where I have been at fault, but also when I have achieved something fine—I shall do the same for you—you will love Bach in me and I shall love Bellini in you—we shall often play duets—in the evening I shall improvise for you in the dusk—and you will sometimes sing softly as I play—and then you will fall upon my breast in happiness and say: 'I had never imagined that it would be so beautiful!'" Clara had reproached him in her father's name, in one of her letters, for saying nothing in his review about her tour; so on the evening of the 4th he went on to explain that he had simply not had time to obtain the information, since pride forbade

him to seem to solicit Wieck's favour by mentioning Clara's name at every moment. If he were to do so, Wieck would rub his hands and exclaim with a laugh: "Does the fellow think he will win me over by *that?*" He did not mean to humiliate himself before the man who had shown no further interest in him for some years past and who picked out everything in him that was open to criticism, with the object of lowering him in his daughter's eyes. "I am fond of him," Schumann added, "but I will not stoop to him, not an inch, and I will not win you by begging." Wieck, he said, had written him a letter that he could not possibly forgive. "Believe me, my heart is tender and good—it still has its pristine purity, just as when it came from the hands of the Most High, but there are some things that I cannot endure, and at such times you might see that I too have claws." Clara had been alarmed at what he had written to her about his "psychical malady"; accordingly, on the evening of the 5th, he answered as follows: "Do not be anxious because of the secret, my beloved Clara—it is the story of my inward sufferings and would call for an account of the tenderest side of my life—do not be anxious—but this much you may know: that you are capable of curing me entirely and making me completely happy—only be true to me, and often send me words of encouragement and love, for I am so easy to crush and then to raise up again. . . . In a week's time I shall have finished the *Davidstänze* and the *Phantasiestücke*. Many a bridal thought is to be found in the *Tänze*—they came into being amid the most

splendid exaltation that I can ever recall. One day I will explain them to you."

How could Clara fail to be touched by these words, breathing the purest tenderness? It was no mere words that he had written to her, she replied, but delicate flowers that he had strewn at her feet. She described the triumphs that she was carrying off, and in which he had a share. The great poet Grillparzer had written some verses to her, containing a charming allegory in praise of her young talent. She had thanked the master and invited him to come and see her, when she would play before him and a few friends Robert Schumann's *Carneval,* "a lovely living picture in music." She tried to persuade Robert that Wieck spoke of him with the greatest enthusiasm and was going to make her play the *Toccata* and the *Études symphoniques* at one of the three matinées for which she was working. She promised him that the time should come when she would stand face to face with her father and say: "'The time has elapsed, two years have gone by; and you see me before you, just as I have always been, with the same love and an eternal fidelity; let your heart be softened, then, and do not refuse us the best thing of all—a father's blessing.' And if he refuses his consent after that, I know what I shall do." She reproached Robert gently for not appreciating her art at its due worth. But she bore him no grudge and was always happy to recall a note which he had written her, in which he had said: "I do not love you because you are a great artist, no, I love you because you are so good" (January 18 and 21, 1838). She begged him not to speak to her about money, and

asked him, in the words quoted above, to forgive her for her prosaic letter. "Believe me, my trust in you is great. . . . I do not doubt or hesitate a moment to place my destiny in your hands, you are generous and good, and so you will make me happy. Your noble pride (in relation to my father) again surprised me. You are indeed a man in the finest sense of the word." She was dying to see him. But the idea of returning to Leipzig, where they would be so near to each other and yet so infinitely remote, filled her with horror. And she asked him if he could not remove his review to Vienna, and whether they would not do well to settle there.

Robert was in ecstasy. Clara had restored him to life, he replied, and what he desired was to rise to ever greater heights of purity through contact with her heart. "For eighteen long months I was a wretched, crushed creature, incapable either of prayers or of tears, my eyes and my heart were as cold and hard as iron. And now how everything is changed, brought back to life by your love and fidelity!" And this unaccustomed happiness expanded his spirit and caused exquisite fairylike music to rise in him as by magic. The *Phantasiestücke* and the *Davidstänze* had appeared. And now he was working at sportive little pieces—scenes of family life, a marriage—which he was going to call *Novellettes,* since he could not call them *Wieckettes.* Then there were the *Kinderszenen (Scenes of Childhood),* inspired by a remark of Clara's, who had said that Robert often seemed a child to her—little easy pieces, but he had poured out in them all the deep poetry that illuminated his soul. And lastly there

were the *Kreisleriana,* which she had inspired, as always, and in which he had portrayed not passion itself so much as the surge of emotion that it caused in the hearts which it overwhelmed. And this fever of creation filled him with joy. "I am writing at present far more easily, more clearly, and, I think, with more charm. . . . I have done hardly anything but compose for the last four weeks. . . . Music came streaming to me, I kept singing to it all the time—and it was nearly always a success. I am playing with forms. For the last year and a half I have felt as though I were in possession of the secret; that sounds strange. There is still much within me. If you but remain true to me, it will come to light; if not, it will remain buried." And again: "Never have I written to you so easily. I am often ready to burst, I am so full of music. I have such a longing to create that I could not help doing it even in the midst of the sea, on a desert island." And, speaking of the *Kreisleriana,* he said: "The music that comes to me now seems so wonderfully intricate, for all its simplicity; it comes so eloquently from the heart and it produces the same effect on all those to whom I play it." And he loved playing it to his friends, and at Count Reuss's house he played it to beautiful countesses with high head-dresses. And he drew a picture of the travels that he was planning. He wanted to go and spend two months in Paris, for Simonin de Sire had written him a charming letter from that city, telling him that his music was making progress in the greatest musical centre in Europe.

But what he chiefly dwelt upon was the idea, suggested by Clara, of going to Vienna and making it his

home. Clara had returned to this plan, going into its advantages minutely and at length. At Leipzig, she said, it was impossible for her to earn a penny, whereas at Vienna, where she was well known and loved, she could easily earn two thousand thalers by giving one concert and a daily lesson, which, with Robert's income of a thousand thalers, would make up the sum fixed by Wieck as the minimum necessary if they were to have a comfortable existence. What was more, life was cheaper and more pleasant than at Leipzig. The surrounding country was lovely. Robert could have his review published by Diabelli, Haslinger, or Mechetti; and it would be much easier for him to become known and appreciated in the musical capital than in little Leipzig. Such was her own conviction, and her father's too, and, if Schumann was unwilling to stay too long in Vienna without her, her father was quite prepared to go to Vienna with her. Schumann was quite convinced by the pleading of such a charming advocate and replied that Vienna should in future be the goal at which he would aim, provided only that Wieck's insistence was not due to a desire to remove him from Leipzig; he did not want to burn his boats unless he were sure that Clara would be waiting for him at the end of the new path on which he was about to start out.

The Wiecks' visit to Austria was, however, drawing to a close. It culminated, on the one hand, in Clara's appointment to the rank of court pianist, an unprecedented distinction for a girl of eighteen, and, what was more, for a Protestant; and, on the other hand, in her making the acquaintance of Liszt, whose play-

ing filled her with transports of enthusiasm and who delighted her by proclaiming Schumann to be the most gifted among the younger musicians and alluding to the *Carneval* as one of the greatest works he knew. After further concerts at Pressburg and Graz the travellers returned to Leipzig on May 10. However much Schumann might declare that he refused to meet her in secret, the lovers met once more: "Not an alley on the road to the suburbs was untrodden by us," wrote Schumann. And the more he saw his beloved, the more he wanted to see her, and to see her for ever at his side! "I have such a longing to see you, and press you to my heart, that I am thoroughly wretched—and even ill. I do not know what it is that I want—yes, I do know it; it is you. I see you everywhere, you walk up and down my room beside me, you are in my arms, and yet none of it is real. I am ill" (June 20). Only two months before, he had written to tell Clara how excellent his physical and moral health was. He had got into the habit of rising at five and going to bed at nine; and found that this sober life, filled with work, was "divine." "I am tempted to believe—this confession will seem strange to you—*that my melancholy is not so deeply rooted in me*, and was only the consequence of my late nights."

Alas, it was not so. That melancholy, which he had called his inseparable companion, was more deeply rooted in him than he was aware. However, he saw Clara again before her departure for Dresden, after which he once more regained his interest in life. "My feelings when I saw you for the last time—when I saw the carriage drive off amid a cloud of dust—I felt

just as you did—the sun hurt my eyes so. Never before had I shed such tears of love. *For a fortnight past I have been ill, more ill than you think and than I have told you.* However, since yesterday things are going on better, and today I have worked all day, and thought more cheerfully of the future. You know, it was my psychical malady again" (July 4).

But scarcely was he beginning to feel less heavy at heart when Wieck began his usual schemes again. He led Clara to believe that Ernestine would protest against their union, and Clara feared that he might take steps to induce her to do so. Robert dispelled these fears. "Ernestine is proud, and too generous and kind to think of such a thing." But it was none the less sure that Wieck's resistance was becoming more stubborn and bitter than ever. He declared to Dr. Reuter, a mutual friend, that he would oppose the young people's love "with fire and sword." And Clara sent word to Robert that "his rage against us has reached its height and he pours out his heart wherever he can." To put the finishing touch to her unhappiness, a certain Ludwig Rakemann, a pianist from Bremen, had asked for her hand and was stirring up Wieck against Robert, while at the same time endeavouring to make her doubt her fiancé's fidelity. On hearing this bad news Schumann was once more overcome by anguish. "I keep wanting to write to you, but there is no sweet melody in me that would give you pleasure. Your father embitters my whole life. He tramples everything underfoot."

However, he found strength to recover from this state of collapse and carry out his plan with regard to

Vienna. Before starting out on his journey he saw Clara and heard her play at a concert; she played divinely, he wrote to her afterwards, but, great as were his admiration and esteem for her art, he suffered at seeing her waste it upon those unworthy of it; once she was his, she should never go on concert tours, unless under pressure of necessity, and she should play only to the initiated and when an overmastering impulse prompted her to do so. The separation was heart-rending. At the last moment Clara wanted to prevent his departure. But he tore himself from her arms and started for Vienna on September 27, stopping on the way at Zwickau—where he bade farewell to "the mountains of his childhood, a thousand beloved spots, and his parents' tomb"—at Dresden, where he paid a visit to Clara's friends the Serres at Maxen, and lastly at Prague.

Schumann had made serious preparations for his journey. In order to provide himself with "copy" in advance, he had asked all his colleagues for articles before starting, and temporarily entrusted the editorship of the *Zeitschrift* to Oswald Lorenz. He made careful inquiries of persons of authority, such as J. Fischhof and Vesque von Püttlingen, an aulic councillor and a musician of merit, as to the probable chances of success afforded by the transfer of the review to Vienna; and did not start before he had received the most encouraging replies. But immediately upon his arrival he realized the obstacles which would impede his plans, and on which it was, indeed, ultimately to come to grief. Vesque, Sedlnitzky, the head of the censorship bureau, and Madame de Cibbini, a

pianist attached to the Empress's household, gave him the best of receptions. But if he was to publish the *Zeitschrift* in Vienna—or, rather, if it were brought out under his name—he would have to either become an Austrian citizen, or else hand over the sole proprietorship of it to an Austrian publisher. He was unwilling to do either and found that publishers who had at first seemed favourably disposed towards him now drew back. Besides, he did not discover the real and insurmountable difficulty till he had been beguiled with fine words and delusive hopes: it was not till February—that is to say, after he had been in Vienna five months—that he heard that his most zealous patron, Sedlnitzky, upon whom everything depended, had decided not to grant him the licence for which he had applied. Moreover, as time went by, he saw that a city in which the facile emotions of Italian opera and catchy waltz-tunes were in future to reign supreme, while in October 1823, Weber's *Euryanthe* had been hissed, was no longer the Mecca once hallowed by the prophets of music. "Serious men and serious things," he wrote, "are not much sought after or understood here. There is no lack of discrimination as to what is good, but there is no organized opinion or co-operation." In order to obtain the triumph of true art and true artists, what would be necessary would be to "unite parties and break up the coteries . . . but the kindly Viennese allow themselves to be led docilely and are content to cry out for a Messiah, to whom they burn to offer the sceptre and crown." This great city was essentially a hotbed of gossip, exactly like Zwickau. And so he felt curiously lost

among that easy, pleasure-loving life, and a population who seemed to keep perpetual carnival. His only real joys had been his pilgrimage to the tomb of Beethoven, where he found a pen with which he intended to write his symphony; the discovery, among Schubert's papers, of the C major Symphony; and an article which he had written on this new-found masterpiece. He had also his walks in the wonderful country round Vienna, his evenings at the Opera and at symphony concerts, and lastly—though who would have believed it?—the sight of the pretty women in Vienna. "I am a great admirer," he wrote to Clara, "of pretty women and pretty girls. Do not be alarmed if, when I see a pretty girl, I say to you: 'Look, Clara, what a lovely child!'"

But rarely did such flashes of gaiety light up his letters. While he was battling against the ill will of the Austrian officials, his love-affair was going from bad to worse. Wieck took advantage of Robert's absence to torment his daughter systematically, in order to gain her consent to his plans. He entered into communication with Ernestine and asked her for a written statement that her former fiancé was now free—which she hastened to send. Next he ordered Clara to dismiss her faithful Nanny, who, as he knew, had taken the lovers' side. He warned Clara that he would do all that was in his power to prevent Robert's success in Vienna. He went so far as to search her pockets to see if she were hiding letters in them, and he wrote to Robert that he would never consent to a union that he abhorred. Beside himself with indignation, Robert

intimated to Clara that no course was now open to her but to gain her liberty by force: let her borrow a thousand thalers from her lawyer and take refuge with his sister-in-law Therese at Zwickau, or with the Serre family at Maxen. But this was asking too much of Clara, who was, after all, still attached to her tormentor. She replied that she would be patient till the appointed time had elapsed—that is, till the year 1840—and even, if necessary, for six months longer. Meanwhile she would visit Paris, as her father had planned. That would enable her to increase her little capital; as to his, she did not wish him to touch it on any account. Robert was prostrated. He replied that he had never expected her to shatter his last hope so suddenly. . . . He had at least supposed that they were completely at one with each other . . . and now she was frowning again and talking about her "anxiety for the future." . . . She had so discouraged him and sapped his power to act or think that he wanted to get away again at once. Clara pacified him as best she could: once again she plighted her solemn word that she would be his at the appointed time. And he recovered his peace of mind and sent her a perfect sheaf of little poems such as the following:

Lorbeeren der Künstlerin
Nicht übel stehn:
Myrthe dem Mädchen
Über alles schön.

(Laurels suit an artist well; but myrtle is loveliest of all for a girl.)

Wir sind getrennt
Wie zwei Sterne am Firmament.
Der eine folgt dem andern nach
Bei Nacht und bei Tag.

(We are parted, like two stars in the firmament. One follows the other night and day.)

Florestan den Wilden,
Eusebius den Milden,
Thränen und Flammen,
Nimm sie zusammen.
In mir beide
Den Schmerz und die Freude.

(Florestan the wild, Eusebius the tender, tears and flames, take them both together. Both are in me, both sorrow and joy.)

Doch wenn ich dir Alles enthüllte
Du sähest auf finstre Gebilde,
Gedanken schwer und trübe—
Frage nicht! Glaube, liebe!

(Were I to reveal all, thou wouldst look on dark pictures; heavy, sombre thoughts. Ask me nothing: believe and love!)

Clara departed, however, on January 8, 1839, and departed alone: her father was unwilling to do anything that would bring her nearer to her goal, and he reckoned upon her discovering how indispensable he was to her. At the thought that she was wandering about the world alone with a foreigner—a Frenchwoman, "who inspired dread rather than liking in

him"—Robert's heart melted into tender solicitude. "And you, a girl, such a delicate maiden, are going off alone into the wide world, full of dangers, for my sake. What you have done this time is the greatest thing you have done for me. . . . Could I but see you now! Your eyes must be flashing fire; you must look at once like a Madonna and a heroine" (January 16 and 19, 1839). On her way this combination of a Madonna and a heroine had stopped at Zwickau, at Hof, where she learnt that Ernestine was married to a Count Zedwitz, thus removing the last scruples that had lingered in her mind; and at Stuttgart, where she met with a triumphant success, and Dr. Schilling, a literary charlatan, who had written a number of miscellaneous works and had just started a short-lived musical review, flattered and inveigled her into suggesting to Robert that he should enter into partnership with him. The young musician's legitimate pride revolted against this. In one of his previous letters (January 25) he had already implored his fiancée not to allude to him as "Jean Paul or Beethoven the second"; he was willing, he said, to be ten times less than another man, but what he was he did want to be on his own account alone. He now tried to make his beloved see what a poor opinion of him she had shown in entering into negotiations with an adventurer on his behalf. What was this Schilling, he wrote, compared with himself, "who may venture to claim that I can detect the slightest progress in our day, who am always progressive as a composer, preparing the way for the future, in however small a sphere. Do not call me stubborn and haughty; but I know what I am

capable of achieving and still shall be in the future. . . . Others do not know it, because I am always learning. . . . Do you really think that one of those 'authorities' could form the vaguest idea of what point I shall perhaps have reached in composition ten years hence? Not one of them, for they have no creative power in themselves, and they will have no clear idea till I have long since gone beyond it." After this quite justifiable revolt of his pride he suddenly grew calmer. He would ask nothing better, he said, than to live at Stuttgart: the town was charming, and the people nicer and more cultivated than the Viennese.

In the long run the people in Vienna began to exasperate him with their evasions, shifts, and easy-going good nature. He did not know which way to make up his mind. The plan of transferring the *Zeitschrift* to Vienna had been an utter failure. The only course left to him was either to return to Leipzig—which would be a triumph for Wieck's pessimistic prognostications —or else to make a new life for himself in Vienna or London. He was unwilling to come to a decision without the advice of Clara, whom he begged to stand by him. "Sometimes I am seized with a sort of anguish—it was so alarming on Sunday that I confided in Fischhof." Clara's answers were consoling. She intended, she said, to give a concert at the Conservatoire in March, and, if this were a success, to give a second at the Salle Érard; then to spend two or three months in England, and return to Paris, where she would give lessons during the summer; during the winter she would tour the provinces and by Easter 1840 would be at Leipzig. If her father continued to refuse his

consent, she would go to Zwickau; Robert would follow her there; they would get married, and set off for Vienna at once, if Robert meant to settle there. When she heard of the vexations with which he was meeting in Vienna, she strongly advised her fiancé to return to Leipzig, where she would rejoin him in 1840, at Easter. In a letter which has been lost, he seems to have complained that she did not care to play his compositions; for she says that, on the contrary, it was because she loved and admired his works that she only played them before the initiated; others did not understand them in the least, which gave her pain. At any rate, those who were really masters appreciated them at their true value—Berlioz, for example, whose acquaintance she had made, kept talking to her about Schumann.

Schumann received this letter on one of his good days. He had just finished his great *Humoreske* (op. 20) in a week, he said, the musical harvest of his stay in Vienna consisting of this piece, with the *Scherzo, Gigue, and Romance* (op. 32), the exquisite *Arabeske* (op. 18), the *Blumenstück* (op. 19), the Finale of the Sonata in G minor, and, above all, the *Faschingsschwank aus Wien* (op. 26), into which he breathed some of the mad gaiety of Vienna, and in which he suddenly introduced the *Marseillaise,* which was strictly prohibited, in order to laugh at the Austrian censorship. But, as always, this happy frame of mind did not last. From March 24 to 27, while he was writing his *Nachtstücke* (op. 23), he was haunted by gloomy forebodings: "While I was composing," he wrote on April 7, "I kept on seeing funeral processions, coffins,

and unhappy, despairing people"; a phrase to which he was constantly returning suggested to him a person sighing from the depths of a heavy heart, and tears would start from his eyes as he worked, he knew not why. On March 30 a letter arrived from his sister-in-law Therese, telling him that her husband, his brother Eduard, was at death's door. Schumann set out at once; on the journey he suddenly heard trumpets playing a chorale, and it was at that very moment that his brother died.

This was a heavy blow to him. The fears which he had expressed as to the material consequences that might be involved in the disappearance of the head of the business in which his capital was invested proved groundless. But he had lost a faithful supporter, an affectionate and understanding friend; and there was now another grave at Zwickau, side by side with so many others. Had it not been for Clara, he wrote, he would long since have been where his brother was. But he had her, and so long as he had her, he would not think about dying; he was sure that the vital energy radiating from the affection which binds us to a loving being preserves our own life.

And so he found the energy to rouse himself from his mourning and plunge headlong into his work. The *Zeitschrift* "smiled on him again, as it had done in its infancy." He wrote the three *Romanzen* (op. 28), worked at a concerto, which he intended to be something between a symphony, a grand sonata, and a concerto proper, and at an *Allegro* in C minor, none of which he finished, but they brought him full consciousness of his mature powers. Inspiration came so

easily and uninterruptedly "that everything seems to gush forth simultaneously and I feel as if I could go on playing without stopping."

Why, he asked, could he not work in perfect peace of mind with her whom he so much desired at his side? Wieck, with a pertinacity that might be called sublime, had it not been applied to such an odious cause, was taking advantage of the annoyances which Clara's first visit to Paris was causing her, to start his campaign of slander against Robert again. He varied his tactics with admirable resourcefulness. Sometimes he approached Clara directly; sometimes he worked upon her through her bosom friend Emilie List, whom she had met again in Paris; sometimes he threatened to take legal proceedings against Robert, and to see that they were prolonged as much as possible; sometimes he made pathetic appeals to her gratitude and filial affection. And these manœuvres did not entirely fail of their effect. It is true that she once more protested vigorously that nothing should detach her from Robert: "My love for Schumann is passionate, indeed, but I do not love him out of mere passion and exaltation, but because I consider him the best of men, because I believe that no other man would love me so purely and nobly as he, or understand me so well; while, on the other hand, I believe that I, too, can make him perfectly happy by giving myself to him, and certainly no other woman would understand him as I do." But she asked her father to be Robert's friend and counsellor, which was no longer possible after what had taken place, and begged Wieck to come and join her, accompanying her to Belgium and Holland

and afterwards to England, which meant consenting to place herself under his domination once more. And she proposed to Robert that they should wait for six months, if not a year, longer. But worse than this: she allowed Emilie List to write her fiancé a letter which could not fail to deal a mortal blow at what was dearest to him besides his love—his amour-propre as an artist. The emotions through which Clara had been passing for months, wrote Emilie (May 1 and 2, 1839), had had a deplorable effect upon her health. Though Schumann had every cause to complain of Wieck's treatment, he had none the less been such an affectionate father to Clara that the latter had admitted to her friend that she could never enjoy a happiness which she had won at the cost of her father's unhappiness. Moreover, Wieck had protested that he had no desire to stand in the way of Clara's love, but desired, on the contrary, to see her united to Robert so soon as he could offer his wife a secure and comfortable existence. There was nothing reprehensible in this desire. Emilie herself was bound to share it, and advised Robert to have patience rather than involve his fiancée in a precarious future. If she was to devote herself seriously to her vocation as a professional pianist, Clara could only give lessons for an hour a day, which would be far from sufficient to contribute towards the expenses of a household. The best means by which Robert could satisfy Wieck's justifiable demands would be for him to take the place which his brother Eduard's death had left vacant in his father's book-shop. It was particularly unfortunate that this letter crossed a note from Robert, dated the 4th, in

which he announced to "his dearly beloved, who was soon to be his wife," that, after long calculations with Reuter, his friend and financial adviser, he had found that all their anxieties had been groundless, for between the two of them they had at their disposal a capital of fourteen thousand thalers, four thousand of which were Clara's, and ten thousand his own, which, with what he earned as a journalist and composer, would give them an income of 1,384 thalers; after deducting all their expenses, this income would still allow them an occasional bottle of champagne, and enable them to give a little assistance to his sister-in-law Therese and Clara's mother, in case of need.

Schumann destroyed his answer to Emilie's letter and to a note from Clara—which he likewise destroyed—in which she urged her friend's proposal upon him in an even more pressing way. But we can reconstitute the latter by the aid of the penitent letter which Clara wrote him on the 13th. In it she asked him what she could do to restore his gentler feelings for her. He had misunderstood her, she said, and given her up in despair. She did not deserve that he should doubt her character or her love. Nothing should prevent her from being at his side by next Easter. She would have no peace till she knew that he had forgiven her.

And, as always, Robert forgave. While the rain and wind were raging outside, he wrote on the 18th, the most glorious sunshine prevailed within him, and he longed to embrace the whole universe. He was angry with himself for having been obliged to be angry with her and speak to her so harshly. But let her only

imagine the effect that must have been produced upon him by her second letter, "so deathly cold, so dissatisfied and perverse. I could not do otherwise than appear as I did.—Those were terrible days. Such emotions as these surge through my whole body, down to its most delicate fibres. . . . Where you are concerned, my vital spirits are doubly active—I am pierced to the very marrow." And he concluded by apologizing for having "shown that he was master in his own house. . . . I may be harnessed to a carriage like a child, but I simply will not let myself be beaten." And to put an end to all these doubts and fantastic plans he sent Clara two letters: one for Wieck, in which he once more asked him for his daughter's hand; the other drafted by one of his friends, who was an actuary, and addressed to the court of appeal, in which, after enumerating all the reasons that Wieck had for giving his consent to a projected union which offered every prospect of happiness, he appealed to the legal authorities either to induce Wieck to give his consent, or, in case of a refusal, to grant it instead of the obdurate parent. This appeal, which Clara was to sign, and in which their two names were to appear together for the first time on an official document, was to be handed in at the court if Wieck's answer to the other letter was unfavourable.

Before sending any answer to Robert, Wieck wrote Clara a long letter enumerating the conditions upon which he would grant his consent, with the intimation that she was to sign it and return it to him at once. The conditions were, however, so ignominious that, as she said, she could not believe that it was her own

father who had written such a thing; and she absolutely refused her signature. She had at last realized that all parleying with Wieck was useless. She therefore hesitated no longer, but on June 15 signed the appeal to the court with a firm and resolute hand. Robert thanked her ecstatically. "Dear child, now I believe that you really love me. Why could I not see you when you signed your name? You must have been like Devrient [the greatest operatic singer of the day] in *Fidelio*. . . . You have publicly announced your betrothal to me and saved my honour—I am a thousand times grateful to you—I would that I could place a crown on your head; but I can only fall at your feet and gaze up at you with eyes full of gratitude. In you I venerate the highest that the world can offer." He next took as his text Wieck's letter to Clara, in which the morose old man had made his consent conditional upon certain things which, though certainly offensive to Schumann, did not exclude all compromise; and he asked Wieck to formulate his wishes, in order that he might try to meet them (June 24). Wieck sent word through his wife that he "refused to hold any communication with Schumann."

This time the cup was full. Robert requested a Leipzig lawyer named Einert to take charge of the case. The lawyer accepted. First he made conciliatory overtures, which came to nothing, and then he started proceedings. We can imagine the agonies which Schumann endured. "Your father is shaking our blossoming trees rudely," he wrote on July 3. "All this has told on me terribly, and if you had been with me yesterday, Clara, I was in such a state that I might have

killed you, and myself too. An evil spirit came over me, and I feared lest it might be a long time before it departed from me." And a week later he wrote: "What crushed me was this unremitting harshness against which we have had to struggle." He made a statement refuting in advance the charges which Wieck would bring forward against him: the affair with Ernestine von Fricken, he said, was long since at an end, and the excesses of "a few riotous nights" had been slanderously exaggerated. And, in his own name and Clara's, he implored his lawyer to act quickly, in order to make an end of "all this vileness."

The court, however, proceeded according to its usual rules and at its usual pace. First of all, both parties had to appear in person before the "Superintendent," Pastor Fischer, with a view to reconciliation. Clara had therefore to return, and on August 13 she accordingly took leave of Paris, where she had felt curiously out of her element, and, deprived of the driving energy with which her father generally managed her tours, had failed to attain the object which she desired: that is, to make a big reputation that should open up the way to England and Russia before her. While waiting for Clara's arrival, Robert received a letter from her mother, Wieck's divorced wife—who had married again, her second husband being Bargiel, a singing-master at Berlin—whom the two young people had asked to consent to their marriage. In her letter she expressed a desire to make the personal acquaintance of the man to whom her child had given her heart. Robert accepted the invitation and went off to Berlin, taking with him Clara's portrait and his

own, a complete set of the *Zeitschrift,* and a few of his compositions, "in order that his future mother-in-law should learn to know him better." The excursion was a success. The city, which he did not yet know, surpassed his expectations, and the Museum filled him with enthusiasm. Above all, he arrived at a perfect understanding with Frau Bargiel. Should Wieck attempt to use force towards Clara, as she feared, she had only to take refuge in her mother's house, which stood open to receive her.

At last, on August 18, after a separation of nearly a year, Robert was able to clasp in his arms the woman whom he loved so deeply and for whom he had longed so desperately: they met at Altenburg, from whence they started out together for Zwickau. "It is high time," Robert had written on the 9th, "to put an end to this terrible state of affairs. My mind and body were both giving way under it; I could neither think nor work—and as for my art, what a lot of ground I have lost! But now that I am soon to see you, all will be well again." But all was not yet well. On the 30th Clara arrived in Leipzig and, as Robert had wished, took up her quarters, not with her father, but with friends, and afterwards with her mother's sister. On the following day she had the joy of embracing her mother, who had come to make her a temporary home. But Wieck had not appeared at the conciliatory interview to which Pastor Fischer had summoned the parties, and had thereby shown that he intended to use every device of procedure to gain time. What was more, he sent Clara the most insulting letter he had yet written.

Robert Schumann.

ROBERT SCHUMANN

After the drawing by Eduard Bendemann

Is it surprising that Robert again relapsed into a state of prostration?

During the whole of the year 1839 these attacks of depression and melancholy had grown more frequent. "And now," to quote a letter of July 7 to Clara, "I beg that you will sometimes speak my name softly before the Most High, that He may protect me, for—I can say it to you—I can hardly pray now, I am so bowed down and hardened by suffering. For I have a grave sin at my door—that of coming between you and your father; and this often tortures me. . . . The day before yesterday was a strange one. . . . It was so spectrally still; the sky was all gauzy white. Several times I saw coffins carried by. I happened to pass the Church of St. Thomas, heard the organ inside, went in—a couple had just been married. . . . In the morning, after handing in our appeal at the court, I happened to meet Voigt; he asked me to visit his wife, who was leaving for a watering-place the following day. That evening I chanced to pass Voigt's house, thought of his wife, and went in. She will probably never come back; she handed me a printed notice announcing the death of Ernestine's husband. . . . I took leave of Frau Voigt as of a dying woman; when I returned home in the evening, yet another hearse went rattling past in an uncanny way." At Zwickau, where he went not long after this "strange day," his condition grew steadily worse; "I tell you all this in a very faint voice; for I feel as though I too ought to lay myself down to rest here, where so many whom I loved are lying. I thought my journey would do me good, but I have only become more melancholy; so I want to get away from

this neighbourhood as soon as possible, for there is no longer any joy for me here." Even in Berlin, in spite of the vivid impression made on him by the great city and the motherly welcome extended to him by Clara's mother, he was haunted by thoughts of death, and though, he added, he tried to reason with himself by constantly repeating: "But I have splendid hopes before me now," "I am often very ill, so strangely weak in my whole body, and especially in my head; it comes of much thinking. . . . Everything tells on me so terribly." It is not surprising that at last Clara became alarmed and wrote in her diary that she grew "more anxious about Robert every day."

Clara succeeded, however, in dispelling by her presence and affection the clouds which darkened her over-sensitive lover's mind. The month of August, which they spent together at Leipzig, was filled with sweet tranquillity. Robert was full of tenderness for his affianced wife. They played Bach fugues and some fine works by Sterndale Bennett for piano duet. And Clara was able to start for Berlin on September 3 without too much anxiety. On the 13th, which was her birthday, Robert came and joined her in Berlin as a surprise, and they spent some happy days there. But Wieck took care to trouble these peaceful moments. On the 12th Clara received a letter from her father, in which he expressed his desire that she should abstain from legal proceedings and have an interview with him at Dresden, where he would meet her to discuss "matters of secondary importance." When Robert and Clara returned to Leipzig on the 4th, their lawyer strongly advised them not to "fall into this trap," and

impressed upon Clara that she must ask her father to meet her at Leipzig, which she did. But Wieck again insisted that their meeting should take place at Dresden. Clara did not know what to decide: "Is it not terrible to be unable to trust one's own father? Heavens, how hard it is! . . . But I am a child disowned by my parents simply because I have a loving heart. Is that right?" At the instance of her lawyer, she reaffirmed her intention of seeing her father nowhere but in Leipzig. She saw him on the 25th and 26th, and, after the usual diatribes against Robert, he laid down four conditions, on the fulfilment of which he was prepared to authorize the court to grant its consent to the marriage in his stead. Firstly, Clara was to give up the two thousand thalers' profit which she had cleared as the result of seven years' concerts, and hand it over to her half-brothers; secondly, her personal property and instruments should be restored to her on payment of another thousand thalers, again to her half-brothers. (This condition was afterwards dropped.) Thirdly, Robert was to settle a capital of eight thousand thalers upon his wife, the interest of which was to be paid to her, and which, in case of a separation, should be entirely at her disposal. Fourthly, Robert was to make her his sole legatee. Both the young people agreed that this one-sided marriage settlement could not be accepted, and so the legal proceedings took their course.

In order to escape for a few days from this atmosphere of base chaffering, Clara had gone to Freiburg to take refuge with their faithful friend Becker, passing through Dresden on the way. Both at Dresden and at Freiburg she played some of Schumann's works, and

once again noted to her chagrin how little they were calculated to please the great public. "I should be so glad to play them," she wrote in her diary, "but the public does not understand them. How troubled I am at the thought that Robert may have to see, later on, how little his compositions please by comparison with other, insipid ones! His mind is far too deep for the public, and so he is bound to be misunderstood. I think the best thing would be for him to compose for the orchestra; his imagination cannot develop amply enough on the piano. . . . His compositions are all orchestral in style, and I believe that is why they are so incomprehensible to the public, because the melodies and figures are so intricately interwoven that it takes a lot of trouble to discover their beauties. . . . People should know them as I do, and then they would find their whole self in his compositions. . . . The time will yet come when the world will recognize him, but this will not be till late."

She was back in Leipzig by the 30th, and on October 3 she and Robert attended the second conciliatory meeting. Wieck again failed to appear and lodged an appeal against the summons, on the ground that the pastor had not allowed a due interval to elapse. At the same time he proposed to Clara that she should wait till she had come of age before getting married, and should go on a three months' concert tour with him, in return for a guaranteed sum of six thousand thalers. Her refusal threw the irascible old man into perfect paroxysms of rage. From this time onwards he shrank from no means, however base, that would avenge him on his ungrateful daughter and the man who had

taken her from him. He now seems to have had no other object in life but that of poisoning their existence. And he succeeded only too well.

When Clara returned to Berlin, on October 3, to give some concerts, Wieck sent word to the amateur who was prepared to lend her a piano not to trust her with it, for she was so accustomed to the "hard English mechanism" that she "smashed all other instruments." He hoped that "the noble King of Prussia" would not allow Clara to play in public without her father's consent. He wrote and told her friends that she was "demoralized by a contemptible fellow." And he assumed the role of showman and flatterer to the coquettish Camilla Pleyel, a charming and gifted pianist whose talent was set up in rivalry with that of Clara.

All these undignified squabbles weighed grievously upon Schumann's unstable spirits. He wrote but little, and his letters were dejected. "I have little cause to be gay, and I am often silent for days on end, without even thinking." He was deeply affected by the death of Frau Voigt, the confidante of his early love-affair, who seems for a time to have aroused feelings more tender than friendship in him. After the funeral, however, he was seized with a burst of energy; he wanted to work, he said, and had started certain compositions which he would show Clara. But he soon relapsed into his apathy and hypochondria. He complained that he no longer had any ideas when he was at the piano, and that he suffered from a "terrible weakness of the head *(Kopfschwäche)*" which prevented him from concentrating his thoughts.

Towards the middle of December, things seemed to

take a turn for the better. Moreover, on the 14th Clara came to Leipzig for another conciliatory interview. This time Wieck was present, and became so violent that the president was obliged to impose silence on him. The judges accordingly held out to the lovers a prospect of a happy issue and they started out in more cheerful spirits for Berlin, where they celebrated Christmas—"the most lovely Christmas," wrote Clara, happy in the company of Robert and her mother, "that she had ever spent."

Robert was back in Leipzig by the 27th, awaiting in a fever of impatience the judgment of the court, which was to be given on January 4. But now Wieck dealt his final blow: he accused Schumann of habitual drunkenness, and the court postponed its judgment until this allegation had been cleared up. Schumann was certainly not the man to look glum in the presence of a bottle of champagne; moreover, he had indulged in some excesses, and, in view of his nervous constitution, he was bound to feel the effects of these more severely than his more robustly constituted friends. But from this to representing him as a drunkard was a step which none but a frenzied hatred like Wieck's could have taken. Schumann's utter distress may be imagined. He did not wish to see Clara again, he wrote, until he was cleared of this shameful accusation. He solemnly warned her that in no circumstances would he ever consent to her reconciliation with her tormentor. But Wieck did not pause for an instant in the course on which he had embarked. On the eve of one of Clara's concerts he sent her an anonymous letter containing the most infamous accusations against

her lover. And he sent all their friends in Hamburg and Bremen, where Clara was on tour, a copy of his deposition, which was a tissue of slanders.

Faced with this mania for persecution, which had now assumed a definitely morbid character, Schumann gradually regained his self-control. He realized that his adversary's blind fury was recoiling upon himself and depriving his accusations of all credibility. Moreover, all his own friends, led by Mendelssohn, had offered of their own accord to bear witness in his favour. Once again he felt that the heavy clouds that had accumulated on his moral horizon were lifting. And, as always happened, this renewal of vital energy expressed itself in music. He spoke to Clara of his work in mysterious terms, as though he feared to check the flow of his inspiration by disclosing what he was working at: "You will be surprised at all I have written recently—nothing for the piano, but you shall not hear what it is yet." This mysterious work which had silently taken form in his mind and lifted him above the humiliations and meannesses with which Wieck had filled his life were the *Lieder*, "six books of *Lieder*, ballads, songs big and small, and four-part songs," which had welled up from his heart as from a deep and inexhaustible spring, and made him, at a single bound, sole heir to the crown so gloriously worn by Franz Schubert. He was amazed himself at the ease with which he worked and the happiness which it gave him. He could not tire of writing for the voice, he said; in a single day he had written twenty-seven pages of music; he felt as though he would die of all this music which was welling up within him, but he could not

stop and was ready to sing himself to death, like a nightingale. At the same time Clara wrote to him that the *Kinderszenen* had aroused enthusiastic admiration at Hamburg, and also at Bremen, together with the sonata and the *Novelletten.*

Fate was certainly in a kindly mood, and was providing him with a sort of compensation for Wieck's odious persecutions. Thanks to the good offices of his friend Dr. R. Keferstein, Schumann was granted a doctorate *honoris causa* by the University of Jena, a tribute to him (so the diploma ran) as a composer of genius, an elegant critic, and an erudite æsthetician. Since Clara's appointment as court pianist to the Emperor, Robert had also wished to have an honorary title. He had first approached the University of Leipzig, but without success. He had, indeed, been made a corresponding member of the Musical Society of Rotterdam, the National Society of Stuttgart, and the Euterpe Society of Leipzig. But in Germany nothing but the title of doctor really ranked as a social passport. And now the man whom Wieck had tried to brand with infamy had attained this dignity in the most honourable fashion. Schumann exulted.

It was amid this joyful fever of creation that he was surprised by a visit from Liszt. Schumann allowed himself to be drawn into the whirl which was so congenial to the temperament of this Titan among pianists, overflowing with vitality and capable of amazing feats of endurance. He went to meet him at Dresden, and devoted two long and enthusiastic articles to him in the *Zeitschrift:* "The tender, the audacious, the vaporous, and the wild succeed one another within the

space of a second; the instrument glows and throws off sparks beneath the master's hand." He spent every day with Liszt, accompanying him to rehearsals, dinners and suppers, "at which music and champagne, counts and lovely ladies are mingled"; and he spoke ecstatically about the second concert, at which Liszt had graciously interpreted three of his friend's works, among others the *Carneval,* which, however, by Schumann's own admission, produced no effect: "The music changes its mood too rapidly for a whole concert-room to be able to follow it . . . and so, however great the genius with which he played them, he might touch an individual here and there, but he could not carry away the whole mass." He realized, it is true, how much there was in Liszt's art that was too tumultuous and merely external; he could discern the tinsel that was mingled with the pure gold, and said that he would give all the sumptuous magnificence of the Hungarian master for the spiritual fervour that filled himself and Clara when they were at the piano. But on hearing him play the *Novelletten,* the *Phantasie,* and the sonata he felt a thrill of delight and "bowed respectfully before the God made manifest." He would like to have made Clara share in this tumultuous life, so different from that which he usually led, though he enjoyed it for a time; and he asked her to come to Leipzig. She responded to his appeal and arrived on March 29, when she saw and heard Liszt, and, though attracted by his genius, and the fire and wit of his conversation, was at the same time repelled by the restlessness, instability, and excess of vitality that fermented in him. It only made her appreciate Robert's calm and

"silence" all the more. And when he showed her his *Lieder,* she felt her respectful admiration for him increasing. "No living creature is more gifted than he," she wrote.

On April 17 they both set out for Berlin, where Robert spent more than a month and he and Clara enjoyed the hospitality of the Mendelssohn family and the presence of Felix. They were greeted by a piece of news which overjoyed them: in default of witnesses, Wieck had abandoned the attempt to substantiate his slanderous statements, and on August 1 the court gave its formal sanction to the marriage. Clara happened to be on a concert tour in Thuringia. Robert met her by surprise at Weimar on September 4; and on the 12th, on a glorious, sunny morning, a friend of Robert's, Pastor Wildenhahn, married Doctor Robert Schumann and Fräulein Clara Josephine Wieck at the little church of Schönefeld, near Leipzig.

Such is the romantic story of Schumann's marriage. Happiness did not fall to our hero's lot naturally, as a ripe fruit drops from the branch. He was forced to win it by a hard struggle, and there was some risk that his dignity and honour might not emerge from the conflict untarnished. Attempts have been made to explain the terrible malady by which he was laid low some ten years later as due, at least in part, to the agonies which he endured during the three hard years of his betrothal. But, in my opinion, these theories have but little foundation. Many remarkable men have had their love-affairs interrupted by equally violent crises, and yet the lovers have not been struck down

by insanity some years later. But it is quite true that the way in which Schumann reacted to the difficulties which beset his path revealed a decidedly morbid temperament. The violent alternations of good spirits and depression which we noted in him as a young man became more marked. His melancholy was no longer to a large extent literary in character: on several occasions it had gone so far as to suggest thoughts of suicide. The "terrible night" of October 17–18, 1833 was a serious crisis of neurasthenia, and his condition immediately before and after his visit to Vienna pointed to a critical state of mind, which, though less serious, was none the less disquieting. And his confidences to Clara, discreet though they were, show us that he knew there was a morbid tendency at the very root of his being. But he believed that if he could win the woman he loved, this tendency would come to nothing. He was fully conscious of the weaknesses of his temperament, even when he was, or thought he was, in a state of perfect mental health. "In future years," he wrote to Clara on June 3, 1839, "you will often be worried about me; much is still lacking in me of what makes a perfect man. I am still too restless and often too childish and lacking in vigour." Yes, this was the reason. His nervous organization was too delicate. Both joy and sorrow, but most of all sorrow, had too intense and profound a reaction upon him. And since his art consisted precisely in recalling the slightest quivers of his sensibility and using them as the living tissue of his works, he was ill equipped to struggle against the predominance of his emotional impulses over his intellectual and practical spheres of activity.

But is not this the fate of many natures with remarkable artistic gifts, and, as it were, the compensation which they have to pay for them? In any case, after the sudden, magnificent expansion of his genius represented by the *Lieder,* when Schumann at last saw the dream of his life realized, there was not a single cloud on his happiness. And we may pause and look upon this sunlit episode in our hero's suffering progress through life, without casting a gloom over it by looking forward to those catastrophes which, at this time, nobody could possibly have foreseen.

The Height of His Achievement and the Decline of His Powers

Leipzig.—The Russian Tour.—Dresden.—Düsseldorf.—Tour in Holland.—Attempt at Suicide.—Endenich.—The Last Agony and the Deliverance

(1840–56)

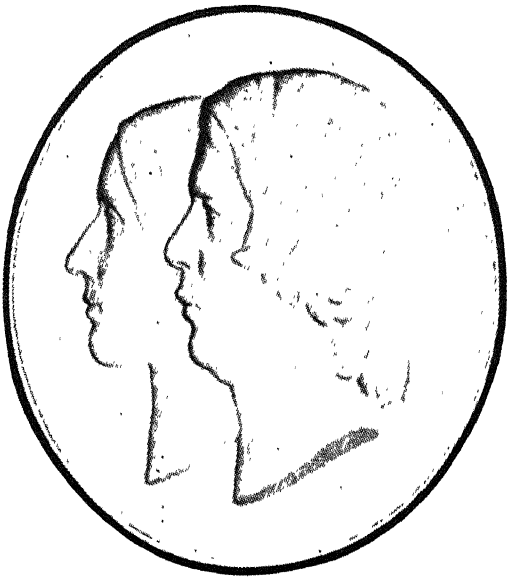
WE HAVE DWELT AT SOME LENGTH UPON SCHUMANN'S youth; we shall deal more briefly with his maturity. The fact is that the most intensely interesting part of Schumann's life, as regards its sentimental, intellectual, and artistic development alike, was his early manhood. There are some privileged individuals, such as Goethe, who live each period of their long existence to the full and are, as it were, a most magnificent incarnation of them all, representing with equal genius the sum total of the experience of childhood, adolescence, maturity, and old age. There are others who are fully themselves during only one of these periods. Schumann belonged to the latter class. He was the very type of the adolescent, with all the vague, unfinished, inchoate quality of that age, but also with all its promise and all the boundless hopes which surround it, as it were, with an ideal halo. As an artist, it is as the creator of *Carneval,* the *Phantasiestücke,* the *Novelletten,* and the *Phantasie,* and of the *Lieder* of 1840, that he appears to me most admirable; and similarly, as a man, it is as the Davidsbündler, the spiritual child

of Jean Paul, and the passionate lover of Clara that he attracts us and holds our interest.

Robert and Clara had come together in the teeth of every obstacle. It ought to be impossible to depict their happiness, and almost indelicate to profane the happy mystery of their life together, by an indiscreet analysis. And yet this is the very task that awaits me.

It is never altogether easy for two people to adapt themselves to each other, especially when each of them has a strong personality: even in the happiest households the first months are the most trying. Schumann's was no exception to the rule. The first bone of contention between the young couple was Wieck. As the days of her trials grew more remote and Clara became more secure in the enjoyment of happiness, she found that filial affection was still alive in her—which is all to her credit. But Robert's wounds were still bleeding; he refused to take any steps towards a reconciliation, and suffered from those attempted by his wife.

But this was not the worst. Their marriage had brought both the young people face to face with a delicate problem. For Schumann the question was how to fill with dignity the difficult position of an "actress's husband," the husband of an artist who had enjoyed brilliant triumphs, who was better known and appreciated than he was, and by whom he was in danger of being overshadowed. As for Clara, she had to be Schumann's wife while at the same time remaining herself; she had to forget self and identify herself with the man she loved, without giving up her triumphs as a pianist and her ambitions as a composer. She complained that her piano "had again fallen into the back-



ROBERT AND CLARA SCHUMANN

After the relief by Rietschel

ground, as it always does when Robert is composing; not a single little hour is set apart for it." After three months of marriage she noted sadly that when her husband was working, he was cold to her. For his part, Schumann was conscious of being a hindrance to his wife, and reproached himself for it. "With a husband who is constantly improvising and composing, things do not go as they should," he wrote in the spring of 1841, in the diary which they both kept; to which Clara's reply was: "We enjoy a domestic happiness such as I had never suspected before. How I pity those who are never to know it!" And so, over and above all their misunderstandings, their unchanging love for each other, and the love of both of them for music, burnt with a steady flame. It was this artistic fervour, which they shared, that enabled Robert to take the place in their family life which was his due. Though he was the less known and applauded of the two, he knew himself to be the superior, not only in creative power, but in his profound understanding of music, and capable of guiding his wife's choice of composers. He devoted himself to this task during the early months of their marriage. He wanted to divert Clara's energies from Herz, Thalberg, and their like, and even from Liszt, whom no pianist of the day was able to resist. He made her study *Das wohltemperirte Klavier* and the *Fugues* and revealed to her the meaning and significance of Beethoven's sonatas. He did more than this: he associated her with his creative work; and the young couple had the joy of publishing a collection of songs, set to words from Rückert's *Liebesfrühling (The Springtide of Love)*, under both their names.

Having done this, the two companions each followed their own way. Robert plunged headlong into a new work, which exhausted him, but made him supremely happy. After the piano and the human voice, he wanted to master the orchestra, and working day and night, with an ease that delighted him, he wrote in a single month—between January 20 and February 20, 1841—his First Symphony, in B flat major (op. 38), inspired by the spring of the year and of his own happiness. Mendelssohn was glad to see this delicate miniaturist turning towards fresco on a grand scale, and conducted the symphony on March 20. Though the critics were dubious, even in his own review, Robert was able to write to Kossmaly that his symphony had been "received as no other had been since Beethoven." Emboldened by success, and seized with a perfect fever of creation, he at once set to work again and wrote between April 12 and May 8 his *Overture, Scherzo, and Finale* for orchestra (op. 52), his *Allegro* for piano and orchestra, which was to become the first part of his Concerto for piano and orchestra (op. 54); and on his wife's birthday, September 13, which occurred just after the birth of their first child, Marie, he was able to offer her as a birthday present the finished score of the Symphony in D minor (op. 120), which was performed in December, but did not meet with the same success as the first and was rewritten by him ten years later.

For her part, so soon as Clara was up and about again, she resumed her concert tours. At first she was invited together with her husband—for instance to Weimar, where Liszt amiably took part in their con-

cert, or to Bremen (February 1, 1842), where the B flat major Symphony and some of the *Lieder* were performed. But he did not receive an invitation to Oldenburg, and in spite of this, Clara accepted, which offended and hurt him. "The thought of my undignified position in such cases prevented me from feeling any pleasure." Their visit to Hamburg, where the symphony was performed, was clouded by this unpleasantness, and when Clara was summoned to Copenhagen, he refused to follow her there. Both husband and wife poured out their griefs in their diary. Clara wrote: "I went without him, but it shall never happen again"; Robert wrote, on March 14: "The separation has once again brought home to me my strange and difficult position. Must I sacrifice my talent in order to act as your escort on your travels? And must you neglect yours because I am chained to the *Zeitschrift* and the piano? And that now, while you are young and strong? We have found the solution. You have found a lady to accompany you, I have returned to the child and to my work. But what will the world say? This is how I torture myself with thinking. It is absolutely necessary that we should find a way to practise and develop both our talents side by side." And he went so far as to entertain the idea of boldly sacrificing two years of his life in order to accompany Clara on a tour in America, which should bring in enough to enable her to dispense with her little German tours. But the scheme went no further. He suffered from his wife's absence and complained that he was leading a miserable life, that he could not compose and was reduced to studying fugue and counterpoint.

But no sooner had Clara returned than he grew cheerful again; his creative genius revived, and in five weeks he finished the three quartets (op. 41), to which were added, in the same year, the exquisite Quintet (op. 44), the Piano Quartet (op. 47), and the *Phantasiestücke* for violin and violoncello (op. 88). The quartets and, above all, the Quintet, met with an enthusiastic reception, and Mendelssohn himself, glad to see his friend venturing on higher tasks and larger forms, was less chary of his encouragement than usual. And so we are not surprised to find Clara writing in June 1847: "My respect for Robert's genius, intelligence, and gifts as a composer increases with every one of his works."

But after this great and successful effort the usual reaction was not long in coming. Schumann complained of fatigue and depression. The almost mathematically regular alternation between his moods of creative exaltation and of relaxed energies was now aggravated by material cares, which the temperament of this poet-musician, reared in comfort, with no knowledge of the realities of life, and wounded by too harsh a contact with them, was ill equipped to face. A second child was on the point of being born to the young couple, bringing with it increased expenses which he did not know how he was to meet. At this moment, by a happy coincidence, Mendelssohn appointed Schumann professor of the piano, composition, and sight-reading at the Conservatoire. We may say at once that he met with no more success as a teacher than he did later as a conductor. That reticence of spirit which we have noted as one of the good

qualities both of his temperament and of his art was the very opposite of the qualities required for the educational task which he had assumed. His taciturn nature made him one of those who neither desire to be on intimate terms with others nor are capable of it. And especially since he had a home, where Clara surrounded him with solicitude and tried to spare him all clashes with the outer world, he had gradually got into the habit of taking no account of it except in so far as he could make it a part of his dreams; and he frequented the society of others only in order to escape from a painful feeling of loneliness. With such a disposition, how could he possibly have been fitted for the position of a professor, whose work consists precisely in getting outside himself and entering into the young minds which he has to form?

Besides, Schumann was too busy with a new and important work to let himself be distracted from it very much by any professional duties. After finishing his Variations for two pianos, two violoncellos, and horn, which were to become the *Andante and Variations* for two pianos (op. 46), he devoted himself enthusiastically to a great work, on a larger scale than any that he had attempted before, consisting in the composition of a secular oratorio, *Das Paradies und die Peri (Paradise and the Peri)* (op. 50), which he completed between February 20 and June 16, 1843, and which was performed on December 4 at the Gewandhaus, with such success that it had to be repeated on the 11th amid enthusiastic applause. The third performance was to take place at Dresden, now the home of old Wieck, who, since his son-in-law's fortunes had begun

to improve, was quite ready to forgive him all the harm he had himself done him. "*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in eis,*" he wrote. "For Clara's sake, and that of the world, we cannot remain strangers to each other. Besides, you are now a father. What is the use of long explanations?" Schumann forgave him and celebrated his reconciliation with his former persecutor at Christmas-time.

The success of the *Peri* was confirmed by Mendelssohn, whose praise had, none the less, a note of surprise. "Schumann," he said, "has most happily emerged from his nebulous manner and revealed great beauties and remarkable simplicity in this work." But though it revived our composer's confidence in himself, it did nothing to improve his material position, which was still precarious. "We are spending more than we earn," he notes sadly. And so he was forced to sanction Clara's old plan of a concert tour in Russia, which she had wanted to carry into effect in the early months of 1841, but which the war in the East had brought to nothing. He now promised to accompany her. This was indeed a great sacrifice for anyone with his morbid horror of society and over-acute sensibilities. But he tried to put a good face on the matter and to appear not to be suffering too much from the position of musical prince-consort which he was once again to occupy. On April 25, 1843 a second daughter, Elise, had been born to them, and now, after taking their little daughters to Schneeberg, they started off on January 25, 1844, stopped at Berlin, where they had the pleasure of seeing Mendelssohn, then passed through Kőnigsberg, Mittau, and Riga, where Clara

was very much fêted, and arrived in St. Petersburg on March 4. Clara gave four concerts, at the first two of which she played to a half-empty hall, but the last two had a large and enthusiastic audience. On April 2 they went to Moscow, where they stayed for four weeks and where Clara's concerts were not very well attended, because it was so late in the season. On May 8 they returned to St. Petersburg, and Clara played before the Tsar and Tsaritsa and the Grand Duchess Helena at Tsarskoe Selo. On the 18th they sailed from Kronstadt to Swineműnde, from whence they returned straight to Leipzig, arriving on the 30th.

What were the results of this long absence? In the first place, the material success was considerable. In the next place, to Schumann, who had never crossed the German frontier before, except for a brief excursion to Italy and a visit to Vienna on business, and who, since his marriage in particular, showed a more and more marked tendency to shut himself up shrinkingly in his own home, these distant travels meant a widened horizon: his memory was stored with changing scenes, especially of what he had seen in Moscow, at whose towers and cupolas he was never weary of gazing; the Kremlin made an indelible impression upon him, and the magical beauty of the Easter celebrations perhaps found its musical expression in his *Bilder aus Osten*. Lastly, Schumann had made some interesting acquaintances, having met the poet Rűckert at Berlin, Jacobi at Kőnigsberg, Henselt at St. Petersburg, an old uncle, his mother's brother, at Tver; and what was more important, he had made a reputation in Russia, not only as the accredited literary champion

of romanticism, but as a creative artist: his Quintet had won universal favour. And yet, during the whole journey, Schumann had been a prey to a sombre melancholy, which, both at Dorpat and at Moscow, had been accompanied by rheumatism and giddiness. It was as his wife's husband, indeed, that he was received with consideration and accepted everywhere, and he felt his false position intensely. But Clara was unaware of this, and no doubt she was not always ready with a gentle enough hand to heal the wound to his amour-propre, which was for ever being reopened. He recorded in his diary his "almost unbearable mortifications," adding the words, charged with painful resentment: "and Clara's attitude towards them!" He was too proud to complain and concealed his sufferings in the depths of his inner consciousness. The only traces of his secret that he allowed to transpire were in the five poems with which the sight of the Kremlin inspired him, though they display, it is true, a singular clumsiness of construction.

And now the young couple were back again in their Leipzig home. In spite of the presence of their little family, they had some trouble in settling down again. After the wide horizons upon which they had gazed, life in Leipzig seemed to them extraordinarily narrow and dull by comparison with the luxurious cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow, where the Tsar, the Tsaritsa, and the whole of the aristocracy had given Clara the most flattering reception. As always, Schumann sought distraction and consolation in work. He wanted to devote himself to the composition of an opera, and

thought at first of Byron's *Corsair*. From Byron he went back to Byron's master, and turned his attention to *Faust*, the sublimest and most comprehensive work in European literature, which he meant to treat as an oratorio, approaching it from its most forbidding and apparently ungrateful side: the closing scenes of the second part. But he was checked while his impulse was in full swing. The nervous exhaustion of which he had felt the painful effects in Russia once more made its appearance, rendering all work impossible for him. His depression was aggravated by the wound to his amour-propre caused by the unforeseen nomination of Gade to the position of conductor of the Gewandhaus concerts, vacated by Mendelssohn's departure. A visit to the Harz Mountains caused no improvement in his condition, and it was only made worse by taking the waters at Karlsbad. He then decided to spend a few weeks in Dresden. The journey was "terrible," and the early days of his stay in the charming capital of Saxony were most disquieting. "Robert did not sleep for a single night. His fancy called up the most terrifying visions. In the morning I always found him bathed in tears; he had given himself up for lost," wrote Clara. "So soon as he busied himself with intellectual matters," notes his doctor, "he was seized with fits of trembling, fatigue, coldness of the feet, and a state of mental distress culminating in a strange terror of death, which manifested itself in the fear inspired in him by heights, by rooms on an upper storey, by all metal instruments, even keys, and by medicines, and the fear of being poisoned." In order to distract his patient's attention from his incessant preoccupation

with music, he advised him to go in for some other form of mental discipline. Schumann consented, and studied some physics and natural history—but not for more than two days. Then, little by little, an improvement made itself felt, and the matchless charm of Dresden began to produce its effect upon both Robert and Clara, so that they decided to settle there for good.

They took up their residence there on October 17, returning to Leipzig on December 8 for a farewell matinée, at which the E flat major Quartet was performed with great success. It did not cost Schumann a great pang to leave the city where he had spent his years of apprenticeship and brought his art to maturity. He had entirely severed his connexion with the *Zeitschrift*, which had been the centre of his activities for so many years, and the editorship of which he had handed over to his colleague Oswald Lorenz, who only kept it from July to December, giving way to Franz Brendel on January 1, 1845. What was more, since the departure of Mendelssohn, who was in his eyes the living embodiment of his ideal, both as a man and as an artist, Leipzig had lost its chief attraction for him. But it was not long before he regretted its intense musical life, the visits of artists such as Chopin, Liszt, and Berlioz, and, most of all, a public schooled by great and conscientious artists in the love and understanding of the austerest and most sublime works.

Dresden was, in fact, the seat of a court, peopled by officials who were but little taken up with intellectual and artistic interests. In vain did Schumann seek for musicians, an orchestra, or a public. In time, however,

he created a circle of friends among painters, such as Bendemann and Hűbner, men of letters, such as Eduard Devrient, and, after 1849, Auerbach. Among musicians, he frequented the society of Ferdinand Hiller, a man of great talent, though the Schumanns did not find in him that religious veneration for art and musical technique to which they were accustomed; and he came into close contact with Richard Wagner —too close, since seeing each other at close quarters brought to a head the ineradicable antagonism between the temperaments of these two great artists. Schumann could not get used to Wagner's restless exuberance, to what Nietzsche was to call his "theatrical" side, while Wagner seemed positively scared by Schumann's taciturnity. And so, however much Schumann might strive to be just, his judgments on the works of this fiery genius were generally unfavourable. Nor did he appreciate him any more highly as a conductor, drawing attention to errors of rhythm in his reading of the Ninth Symphony, and to his tendency to distort Beethoven's conceptions by the use of *ritardando.*

All these conditions did not augur very well for the future. They were further complicated by disputes with the Wieck family, material cares—three sons were born to the Schumanns at Dresden, one of whom died after a few months, besides a daughter, making six children—and lastly, anxiety about his health, which became more and more unremitting and agonizing. In May 1845 Robert suffered tortures of giddiness, and in the spring of 1846 he was worn out and afflicted with profound melancholia, owing to an over-

excited condition of the nerves of the ear, which forced him to convert all noises into musical sounds. But he profited by every moment of improvement to return to his beloved work. In the first place, in order to give some rest to his overworked creative faculty, he went in for theoretical studies, in which Clara also took part; he plunged into the study of Bach, "the incommensurable," once more, and under his inspiration wrote the *Vier Fugen für das Pianoforte (Four Fugues for the piano)* (op. 72), some *Studien für den Pedalflügel (Studies for the pedal piano)* (op. 56), and *Sechs Fugen über den Namen Bach (Six Fugues on the name Bach)* for organ (op. 60), and, in fact, made himself master of counterpoint. He next completed the Concerto in A minor for piano and orchestra (op. 54), which he had started in May 1841; and it was performed at the Gewandhaus on January 1, 1846, with Clara at the piano. This was a memorable date for both the Schumanns. From this time onwards Clara almost entirely abandoned the frivolous virtuosity of Thalberg, Liszt's acrobatic feats, and Henselt's miniature pieces, and devoted herself to an austere, conscientious, and profound interpretation of the works of Bach, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and her husband. In this way, as she herself wrote, she reconciled the discrepancy between her aspirations as an artist and her duties as a wife.

In his anxiety to fight against his physical sufferings by a vigorous intellectual effort, Schumann had sketched out the plan of the Symphony in C major even before the performance of the Concerto, between December 12 and 18. Before proceeding to the work-

ing-out of this great work, he wrote several vocal quartets which were to become the *Fűnf Lieder für gemischten Chor (Five Songs for mixed choir)* to words by Burns (op. 55). He then returned to the symphony, but his health, which had again become precarious, forced him to stop. Unable to remain idle, he next thought of writing the biography of a Davidsbűndler, which would have been the story of his own life. He meant to incorporate in his narrative certain of his articles and poems, the whole being "bound together by a thread of romance." Imagining himself to be better, he next abandoned this scheme and, towards the middle of May, set to work on the symphony again; but he was once more forced to give it up. He next reverted to his old plans for writing an opera. In the previous year he had thought of writing one on the subject of *Hermann and Dorothea* and had discussed the subject of the arrangement of the libretto with such well-known poets as Halm and Annette von Droste-Hűlstoff. This time he called in the aid of Reinick, a friend of his who was both poet and painter. His health again took a turn for the worse, so he went to the country in search of quiet and to regain his capacity for work, but left it because he was disturbed by the sight of a lunatic asylum near by. He now resigned himself to laying aside all work till the autumn. A cure at Norderney, however, restored him to health, when he at once took up the symphony again, orchestrated it with feverish haste, and had the joy of hearing it performed at Leipzig on November 5, and repeated on the 16th. If we add to this big and exacting work the *Fűnf Lieder (Songs by Burns)* (op.

55) and the *Vier Gesänge für Sopran, Alt, Tenor, und Bass (Four Songs for mixed chorus)* (op. 59), it may be granted that, for a year of sickness, Schumann had not been too idle.

He had earned some recreation, which he took by accompanying Clara on a concert tour in Austria in December. It was a disappointment to them both. Clara did not repeat her triumphs of the previous year in Vienna and could not succeed in commanding a favourable hearing for her husband's music, which was too charged with feeling, too full of bitterness and pain, for the taste of Vienna, spoilt by the facile melodies of Italian opera, and the melodramatic outbursts of Meyerbeer's operas, of which *Robert the Devil* was creating a furore at that time. Neither the piano concerto, the B flat major Symphony, nor even the Quintet, which enraptured all audiences everywhere else, found favour with the public. By the third concert the Schumanns were losing money, and though the hall was packed for the fourth, this was because Jenny Lind, whose talent was then at its height, was singing. Among other songs she sang the *Nussbaum,* with such an understanding of the words and music, and such a simple, natural, and profound rendering, that the composer was filled with enthusiasm. However, Schumann would not let himself be at all downcast by this partial failure. "Calm yourself, dear Clara," he said. "In ten years' time things will be different." They left with the sad conviction that the plan which they had cherished of settling in Vienna could not be realized. "Robert was unappreciated, and Clara with him and through him." On the other hand, Brűnn and Prague

applauded not only Clara's playing, but the Concerto, the Quintet and the song-cycle *(Liederkreis)* composed to words by Eichendorff, so that, after a short visit to Dresden, they set off again in excellent spirits for Berlin, where the *Peri* was performed on February 17, 1847, with such poor soloists that it had only a meagre success. Schumann's music—the Quintet and the E flat major Quartet—likewise met with a very qualified appreciation at the two concerts which they gave. In spite of this the welcome given them by the Mendelssohn family, especially Felix's sister Fanny Hensel, as well as by others, was so cordial that they thought for a moment of settling in Berlin. Perhaps it was Fanny's death, which took place in May 1847, that brought the plan to nothing.

By March 25 the Schumanns were back again at Dresden, where they felt strange and almost exiled. After Vienna, Berlin, and Leipzig—where they had stopped on their way home, seeing Mendelssohn for the last time—they felt how remote the town which they had chosen as their home was from the real musical centres. It is true that artists like young Hans von Bűlow, the infant prodigy Joachim, Jenny Lind, and Schrőder-Devrient would pass through, and sometimes stay there—as in the case of the last named. And, to the great astonishment of the Dresdenërs, the Schumanns had succeeded in organizing subscription concerts, which they carried on till Hiller's departure; while every week Robert went to gatherings at which were present artists such as Bendemann, Hűbner, Rietschel, Reinick, and Richard Wagner. But among all these distinguished men he had not a single real friend,

such as he had found so abundantly in Leipzig, who shared his artistic convictions; and this was what filled him with melancholy.

Fortunately, he was refreshed by his travels and full of eagerness to work. He was more and more attracted by opera, in which Wagner had won his triumphs, and in which he, too, believed himself capable of achieving success and so attaining, at a single bound, a great reputation and an improvement in material prosperity. After hesitating between twenty or more subjects, among which were the Nibelungs, Lalla Rookh, Attila, Mary, Queen of Scots, the Corsair, Sakuntala, Mazeppa, Wilhelm Meister, Bajazet, Tieck's *Genoveva*, Hebbel's *Genoveva*, *Judith*, and *Diamond*, his choice fell upon Hebbel's *Genoveva*. He discussed the matter with the poet, who came to see him in July, and next commissioned Reinick to arrange a libretto by amalgamating Hebbel's harshly realistic play with that of the gentle, romantic Tieck. While waiting for the libretto, he wrote the overture to his opera, which remains its finest page. He next completed the final scene of his *Faust*, of which he afterwards recast the last chorus. In a single burst of inspiration he now composed the two fine Trios in D minor (op. 63) and F major (op. 80), the first of which, in particular, is a perfect masterpiece, besides the *Drei Lieder (Three Songs)* for male chorus (op. 62) and a setting of Rűckert's *Ritornelle* for four-part male chorus (op. 65). He was justifiably contented with himself and was able to leave for Zwickau with a light heart. His C major Symphony was enthusiastically applauded there, and the whole of his

little native place gave a warm welcome to the musician and his wife. But a terrible piece of news awaited them on their return: Mendelssohn had been struck down on November 4 by an apoplectic stroke, at the height of his youth, productive power, and genius. There was nobody by whom the godlike young man was mourned more bitterly than by the Schumanns. The feelings expressed in Robert's *Schwärmbriefe* at the time of Mendelssohn's arrival in Leipzig had remained unaltered, and Clara had adopted them with fervour. "We loved him, not only as an artist, but as a man and a friend." Robert saw him lying dead, "like a glorious fighter, like a victor," and accompanied him to the grave, together with Moscheles, Gade, David, and Joachim.

Their mourning for Mendelssohn's death was now deepened by another great grief. Ferdinand Hiller, Robert's only intimate musical friend in Dresden, left for Düsseldorf. Robert was now completely isolated. He tried to face the situation bravely, accepted the invitation to succeed Hiller in the directorship of the Choral Society, founded another choral society with a mixed choir, and absorbed himself entirely in his opera; he recast the libretto and completed the music between January and August 1848, in spite of all the interruptions caused by the state of his nerves. At the same time he composed one of the finest choruses of his *Faust:* "*Gerettet ist das edle Glied,*" published the *Klavierstücke für die Jugend,* which formed a pendant to his *Kinderszenen,* and threw himself, "with an ecstasy such as he had never experienced before," into the composition of a fresh work, a setting of

Byron's *Manfred,* which has such affinities with *Faust* and was intimately suited to his temperament and genius. If we add to this splendid harvest his setting of Rückert's *Adventlied* for chorus (op. 71), the exquisite *Bilder aus Osten* for piano duet (op. 66), and the first five of the *Waldszenen* (op. 82), it is not surprising that the nervous susceptibility of his over-exhausted brain increased and became intensified. This showed itself in a curious way on the occasion of a visit which Liszt made to him in June. The feelings which the great pianist inspired in the Schumanns were of a mingled order. They admired him as a virtuoso, though they did not like the excessive brilliance and uncontrolled force of his playing; but they detested his music, and, as regards his personal character, they shared the opinion of Mendelssohn, who had said that Liszt's life oscillated between scandal and apotheosis. Liszt having courteously expressed a desire to hear Schumann's Trio, Clara invited a few of their friends, whom he kept waiting for two hours. When he at last arrived, he listened to the Trio and praised it highly, but gave it as his opinion that the Quintet was "too much in the Leipzig manner *(zu leipzigerisch)*" and, after playing execrably himself, began to praise Meyerbeer to the skies at the expense of Mendelssohn. Schumann was indignant and declared that Meyerbeer was a dwarf by comparison with Mendelssohn, whose works were not only for Leipzig, but for the whole world, and that Liszt would have done better to keep silence; upon which he walked out of the room. F. G. Jansen says that he had it from Clara that Schumann had seized Liszt by the

shoulders and that it was the latter who withdrew, after a vain attempt to dispel the awkwardness felt by all those who had been present at this painful scene, asking Clara to tell her husband that he would not have endured such words as Robert had spoken from anybody else. It had undoubtedly been a lack of tact on Liszt's part to say anything unfriendly about a musician whom he knew to have been so much loved and respected by the Schumanns, and that only a few months after his premature death; but Schumann certainly forgot himself, especially when we consider that he was addressing a guest, and one who had always shown himself the most friendly of colleagues to Schumann—and indeed to all gifted musicians, whether they were his friends or not. Schumann was undoubtedly overwrought by the excess of work in which he had indulged.

And so the year 1849 opened badly. As early as January, Schumann succumbed to an attack of melancholia. But though his evil genius was vigilant, he struggled vigorously against its encroachments. He set to work again and wrote in rapid succession the rest of the *Waldszenen* (op. 82), some *Phantasiestücke* for clarinet and piano (op. 73), an *Adagio and Allegro* for horn and piano (op. 70), a *Konzertstück* for four horns and orchestra (op. 86), some *Romanzen und Balladen* for chorus (Book I, op. 67; Book II, op. 75), some *Romanzen* for female choir (Book I, op. 69; Book II, op. 91), and the *Spanisches Liederspiel* (op. 74). And he was about to supplement this enormous output, in which, as Clara wrote, we have "all the instruments in turn," by five *Stücke im Volkston*

(Pieces in the Folk Manner) for violoncello and piano (op. 102), when, on April 9, he received the news of his brother Karl's death. One by one, all the branches of his family tree were falling, and Clara quite truly wrote that he had nothing left but her and the children. And now yet another event was about to occur to prevent him from surmounting the melancholy tendencies aroused by his bereavement, and cause an interruption in his work. On May 3 an insurrection broke out in Dresden.

The Schumanns had advanced views and among their own circle of friends had often broken a lance in favour of revolution and the idea of a republic. But it was a purely intellectual sympathy. Schumann, who had such a morbid craving for solitude that he now elected to take his walks along none but the most deserted roads, was not, like Wagner, the man to mix with the mob and take part in riots. The following is the account given by Clara in her diary of the events of these exciting days and their effect upon Schumann: On the 3rd, the King having refused to accept the constitution of the Reich until Prussia had done so, the people stopped his carriage just as he was on the point of flight, and tried to seize the arsenal. The city was filled with the report of shots and the ominous sound of the tocsin. On the 4th, barricades were erected everywhere. The democrats formed a provisional government. The corpses of fourteen citizens who had been killed were exhibited to the public view, and the Schumanns had to witness this terrifying spectacle. On the 5th a civic guard was formed in the street where the Schumanns lived, and an attempt was

made to enrol Robert in it. Clara twice declared that her husband was absent, upon which the citizens wanted to search the house. The Schumanns, in alarm, fled by way of the garden gate with their eldest daughter and succeeded in reaching the station, arriving at last, by one means or another, at Maxen, where they took refuge with their friends the Serres. They had come away without any luggage, leaving five of their children behind. As evening approached, Clara was in terrible anxiety and wanted to go and fetch them. But she could find nobody to accompany her: Robert could not leave Maxen, for a rumour had gone round that the insurgents would force all men capable of bearing arms to take part in the fighting. On the 7th Clara left at three o'clock in the morning, and, amid the thunder of cannon-fire, made her way to their street, where she saw four men armed with scythes coming to meet her. Passing them, she at last arrived at her house, where she found the children still asleep. She woke them, dressed them, and took them to Maxen, where Robert was awaiting them in a state of anxiety that can be imagined. "The people were splendid. I should never have believed that the Saxons would be so brave." On the 8th Clara took three of the children to stay with a family where a number of "aristocrats" had gathered together, "who referred to the people as nothing but *canaille,* so that one felt most uncomfortable there." By the 9th the revolution was crushed. On the 10th the soldiers started carrying out reprisals: twenty-six students were shot, one after the other, and dozens of people were thrown down from third and fourth storey windows. "It is too

abominable to have to live through such things! And this is how men have to struggle for their scrap of liberty! When will the time come when all men will have equal rights? How is it possible that the belief held by the nobility that they are a different race from us bourgeois can have remained so firmly rooted in them for such ages past?" On the 10th the Schumanns took a walk round the town. The sight of the damage caused by the fighting was most alarming: houses gutted, the opera-house burnt down, the churches full of prisoners. "Wagner is said to have played a part among the republicans, made speeches from the Rathaus, and had barricades constructed according to his plans." The Schumanns decided to take up their abode at Kreischa, which had a better situation and was warmer than Maxen. Robert continued to follow the course of events with feverish interest and devoured the newspapers, from which he learnt that a warrant had been issued for the arrest of Wagner, that Semper the architect was being prosecuted, and that reaction was triumphant.

The violent disturbance produced in Robert's mind by these events gradually subsided and he settled down again in Dresden. The town was full of Prussian soldiers who—"Oh, shame! after shooting harmless citizens, demand food and drink." And now the springs of his creative faculty, checked for a moment, began to well up again with extraordinary abundance and power. Before leaving the country he had written *Fünf Gesänge aus Laubes Jagdbrevier (Five Hunting-songs)* for four-part male chorus, with accompaniment for four horns (op. 137), and *Vier Märsche (Four*

Marches) for the piano (op. 76). Then, as soon as he had returned, came the motet *Verzweifle nicht,* for double male choir (op. 93), the *Lieder und Gesänge aus Wilhelm Meister* and the *Requiem für Mignon* (op. 98, a and b), the cathedral scene, the garden scene, Ariel's scene, and Faust's awakening for his *Faust,* the *Vier Duette (Four Duets)* for soprano and tenor, with pianoforte accompaniment (op. 78), twelve *Klavierstücke* for piano duet (op. 85), *Introduction and Allegro appassionato* for piano and orchestra (op. 92), *Vier doppelchörige Gesänge (Four Songs for double choir)* (op. 141), Hebbel's *Nachtlied* for choir and orchestra (op. 108), the *Spanische Liebeslieder (Spanish Love-songs)* (op. 138), *Drei Gesänge* from Byron's *Hebrew Melodies,* for solo voice, with harp or pianoforte accompaniment (op. 95), and *Drei Romanzen* for oboe and piano (op. 94). This year, 1849, was indeed, as Schumann said, "the fruitful year *(das fruchtbare Jahr)*"—fruitful from every point of view, for, besides this magnificent harvest of compositions, it saw the birth of a sixth child, his son Ferdinand, one of those satisfactions which fate meted out to him so parsimoniously during his life. The fragments of his *Faust* were performed at Dresden by his mixed choir on the occasion of the Goethe centenary, and the whole work—except *Die vier grauen Weiber (The Four Grey Women),* the death scene, and the overture, which were not completed till 1850 and 1853—was mounted at Weimar by Liszt with entire success, and at the Gewandhaus at Leipzig with less success—perhaps, as Clara notes, "because in the final chorus," which was beyond question

the culminating point of the work, but had pleased the audience least, "the beginning is not in harmony with the words and, in spite of all its isolated beauties, is of a somewhat more material colour."

It was Liszt who had prompted this invitation to Schumann. No doubt he had not forgotten the painful incident in the summer of 1846. But his great heart was incapable of harbouring a grudge. Schumann had not forgotten either, and though he was conscious that he had gone too far in his behaviour to his guest, the "too much in the Leipzig manner" was more than he could swallow. He accordingly replied to Liszt's offer in the following very significant letter: "But, my dear friend, might not my compositions be *too much in the Leipzig manner* for you? Or do you consider that Leipzig is, after all, a miniature Paris, where there are even people capable of doing good work? Seriously, from you, who know many of my works, I should have expected something different from such a sweeping judgment on a whole artistic life. If you looked more closely at my compositions, you would be bound to find a fair variety in their point of view; indeed, I have always attempted to bring something different into being in every one of my compositions, and that not only in form. And really the group at Leipzig was not so bad—Mendelssohn, Hiller, Bennett, etc.—we could quite well have measured ourselves against the musicians of Paris, Berlin, or Vienna. If our compositions have many traits in common, call it Philistine or what you will. But the same thing can be noted in every period of art, and Bach, Handel, and Gluck, and, later, Mozart, Haydn,

and Beethoven, are so alike in a hundred passages that they might be mistaken for one another. (I except Beethoven's later works, though they again point back to Bach.) Nobody is entirely original. So much for your remark, which was unjust and offensive. For the rest, let us forget that evening—a word is not an arrow, and the main thing is that we should work for progress." Liszt replied in amiable terms, and when they met, at the first performance of *Genoveva*, the Weimar composer gave proof of his usual kindliness by proposing the health of the two Schumanns at the banquet, in a speech as witty as it was amiable. But this reconciliation was only apparent. In reality this letter, of which I have purposely translated the whole, marks, as it were, the line of demarcation between the Schumann who, both as a musician and as a romantic critic, together with Mendelssohn, Berlioz, and Chopin—not to speak of the composer of the Ninth Symphony and of the quartets—paved the way for that neo-German school of which Liszt was to be the organizer and patron, if Wagner was its creative genius —and the Schumann who, after being an admirer of the classics, even during his revolutionary period, felt that he was himself becoming classical. In this attitude of reserve towards the new school he was warmly upheld by Clara. This opposition, which was simply a matter of principles to Schumann, was carried by Clara, with her more passionate woman's nature, into the sphere of personalities. And we shall see how, when Robert was no longer alive, his widow, thinking herself to be acting in accordance with her deceased

husband's views, placed herself at the head of those who openly opposed the Weimar school.

But let us not anticipate. We have reached the end of the "fruitful year." Alas! it was only too fruitful. Schumann's nervous system was too delicate to stand the strain which he was putting upon it. He himself said that perpetual listening to music with his "inner ear" had so exhausted him that he had lost the faculty of recalling the melodies that he created. But at that period, carried away by the joy of feeling innumerable melodies and harmonies surging up within him like a rising tide, he did not dream of checking it. He yielded without resistance or moderation to the promptings of his genius, which amazed even his wife: "What a feeling of joy one must experience at being incessantly carried away into higher and higher spheres by such an inexhaustible imagination," she wrote on March 13, 1849; and again on April 21: "I am sometimes quite transported with admiration for my Robert." During the closing days of the year 1849 he wrote a setting of Rückert's *Neujahrslied* for chorus and orchestra (op. 144), to celebrate the New Year.

But now this master of choral and orchestral composition felt the desire arising within him to have better choirs than those of Dresden at his disposal, and an orchestra, in order to give life to his creations by means of an instrument which he would handle with supreme skill. By a curious but very human anomaly Schumann, who, as we have seen, felt a repugnance for any display of his talent, which was best fitted for intimacy and mystery, and, above all, disliked appearing in public, none the less suffered at not

being the director of any important musical organization, such as a society for giving instrumental concerts, a large and experienced choral society, or a *conservatoire*. No prospects were open to him at Dresden. He had not met with the reception due to his brilliant genius either from the administrative world, the official musicians, or the great public. After Wagner's departure it was not to him that the post of conductor, occupied by that composer, had been offered. He had had thoughts of the directorship of the Gewandhaus concerts, and afterwards of Vienna, where that of the Conservatoire was about to fall vacant. But there, too, his discreet overtures met with no response. He now began seriously to consider the plan submitted to him by Ferdinand Hiller, that he should take Hiller's place at Dűsseldorf as director of the secular and sacred concerts of the Gesangverein. The position was not a brilliant one, the income being only seven hundred thalers a year, but it was an honourable one, and Clara, who was trying her fortunes as a teacher and had got together a growing band of pupils, could naturally carry on her work as well on the Rhine as in Saxony. The only thing that held him back was the hope of obtaining a more prominent position: besides, he had read in an old guide-book that, in addition to three nunneries, there was a lunatic asylum at Dűsseldorf, and he could not bear the sight of one. And, lastly, a great joy had come to him, an achievement which might, he thought, change the whole face of his existence.

As soon as he had finished *Genoveva,* Schumann had offered it to the Leipzig theatre, which had accepted

it, but never performed it. He now received notice that the theatre was going to produce his opera in February 1850. He accordingly suspended all negotiations with Düsseldorf and hurried to Leipzig with Clara, both of them trembling with hope. There a first disappointment awaited him: *Genoveva* was obliged to make way for Meyerbeer's *Prophète*. In the next place, Robert's *Introduction and Allegro* was played by Clara at the Gewandhaus with less than her accustomed mastery and did not meet with the success which he had expected. He next decided to accompany Clara on a tour which took them to Bremen, Hamburg, and Altona. This time fortune smiled upon them. The overture to *Genoveva,* the Concerto, the Quintet, the Second Trio (op. 80), all met with enthusiastic applause, and so did the songs in particular —among them *Der Nussbaum, Frühlingsnacht,* and *Der Himmel hat eine Träne geweint,* whose grave and reticent beauty was at last brought home to the public by the incomparable Jenny Lind.

They returned to Dresden towards the end of March in more cheerful spirits, and on the 31st Robert wrote to Düsseldorf accepting the offer, not without a secret hope that he would be able to withdraw at the last moment. And in fact *Genoveva* was really on the point of being performed. They set out for the rehearsals at Leipzig in the middle of May, Robert in rather a bad frame of mind. The rehearsals were accompanied by the usual exasperating incidents. Moreover, Clara was hurt by the more than cool reception given to some of Robert's recent works—the *Minnespiel* and the *Stücke im Volkston* for violoncello and piano (op. 102)—

by their circle of musical friends. "What *do* people want?" she wrote in her diary. "A peculiarly stupid atmosphere seems to prevail, even here, among those who understand music; they refuse to consider anything beautiful that is not by Mendelssohn, and it is not till the public has recognized a work that they follow in its footsteps and find it beautiful too. David is one of this sort—the chief of them, indeed. I no longer want to play to people here, they are too cold and ungrateful, with the exception, naturally, of a few people and of the public. I am only speaking here of the Mendelssohn clique."

But now the long-expected first performance of *Genoveva* drew near, which had been fixed for June 25. Their friends began to arrive: Reinecke from Bremen; Grädener, Schubert, and others from Hamburg; Ehlers from Kőnigsberg; Hiller from Dresden; Liszt from Weimar; which, with Joachim, Gade, Moscheles, Hauptmann, and David, made a fine assembly of musicians. The family was represented by Clara's father and mother and Schumann's sister-in-law Pauline Schumann; and old Kuntsch, Robert's first master, had come from Zwickau. The performance was a creditable one, though an accident connected with the stage business caused a certain jerkiness in the last two acts, and the success with which the opera met was no more than a *succès d'estime*. "The public," wrote Clara, "was very attentive, and at the end both the singers and Robert were twice called before the curtain, amid loud applause. A laurel wreath was thrown down on to the stage, and Frau Gűnther placed it on Robert's head." The second performance

was received more warmly, and the third was a triumph: this time the singers were recalled after every act, and Robert had to appear on the stage at the end, when he was greeted with enthusiastic applause. But in vain did Clara record these passing triumphs; in reality *Genoveva* had disappointed even Schumann's admirers. The criticisms of it were not very favourable, and in spite of the attempts that have recently been made to rehabilitate it, posterity has confirmed the verdict. The whole of the vast realm of music lay open to Schumann; opera alone was unsuited to his temperament and to the fundamental character of his genius.

They were back in Dresden by July, and, after a charming farewell celebration at the house of the Bendemanns, who, with the Hübners, were the only friends whom they regretted, they started out for their new home on September 1.

The first impression that Düsseldorf made upon them was not a bad one. The picturesque situation of the city, surrounded by the Düssel and the Rhine; the old part of the town, with its narrow, winding streets; the art-school, where the great memory of Cornelius still survived, and for which Schadow was winning fresh fame at the time of Robert's arrival; the pleasant, frank, animated temperament of the people—all these things had an attraction for the Schumanns. The welcome which they received was extremely cordial. A musical entertainment was given in their honour, at which the overture to *Genoveva* was played, and some *Lieder* sung, followed by the second part of the

Peri; both the orchestra and the choir seemed to them creditable. Hiller, who had come to do the honours of the city and its inhabitants to his successor, brought them into touch with the members of the concert committee, Professor Hildebrand, the lawyer Euler, and the notabilities of the city: Schadow, Dr. Müller, and Dr. Ernst, with whom they at once became friendly. But the worries of moving, and the drawbacks of an unsatisfactory residence, where Schumann was unable to work, owing to the noises from the street, had an unfortunate effect upon the musician's mental condition. A short excursion to Cologne, which filled them with enthusiasm, distracted them from their troubles for a time, but they found the same annoyances waiting for them again on their return. Frau Clara was repelled by the coarseness and familiarity of the lower classes and shocked by the excessive freedom of the women's manners, which, as she said, "sometimes positively oversteps the bounds of womanliness and propriety; married life here seems to be rather in the frivolous, French style." But in the end things settled down. The first subscription concert drew a large audience, and people crowded to it from Crefeld, Elberfeld, and Münster. What was more, and, indeed, essential in view of the great expense of moving and settling into their new home, upon which Clara comments with many sighs in her diary, she found pupils in Düsseldorf and the surrounding towns, and a number of pianists came to her for finishing lessons. The presence in Düsseldorf of Wasielewski, an excellent violinist, who was afterwards Schumann's biographer, and whom Robert had brought there from

Leipzig, as well as of other capable instrumental players, enabled them to perform good chamber-music. And so their spirits rose and they began to feel at home. Robert recovered confidence in himself and in the future and set to work again. In addition to several books of songs (op. 144, 83, 89, 90) and the Concerto for violoncello and orchestra (op. 129), he wrote *"Die vier grauen Weiber"* and *"Fausts Tod,"* thus completing his great work, and, between November and December 9 (1850), wrote his Third Symphony, in E flat major, known as the "Rhine Symphony," in which he tried to give form to the feelings and images suggested to his musical imagination by his new home.

There was no slackening of his labours in the new year. A young student from Leipzig, Richard Pohl, an enthusiastic admirer of Schumann, who was convinced that the comparative failure of *Genoveva* was solely due to the feebleness of the libretto, submitted to him an arrangement of Schiller's *Braut von Messina.* Schumann was attracted by it and composed an overture to it (op. 100), again during the latter part of 1850. Fascinated by this form, he also composed a *Julius Cæsar* overture (op. 128) and a *Hermann und Dorothea* overture (op. 136). The same Richard Pohl further submitted to him a plan for an opera of which Luther was to be the hero. Schumann adopted the project warmly and meant to write "a thoroughly popular work that can be understood by peasants and the middle classes . . . producing its effect as little as possible by contrapuntal artifices and complications, but rather by rhythm and melody." But he was un-

able to carry out this great project and devoted himself to more modest tasks: various songs (op. 107, 117, 119, 125), notably his settings of words by the poetess Elisabeth Kulmann (op. 103 and 104), for whom he professed an admiration so excessive as to appear almost morbid, the *Märchenbilder* for piano and viola (op. 113), some *Ballszenen* for piano duet (op. 109), three *Phantasiestücke* for the piano (op. 111), the Sonata in A minor for piano and violin (op. 105), a secular oratorio in the style of the *Peri,* but without its charm, called *Der Rose Pilgerfahrt (The Pilgrimage of the Rose)* (op. 112), to the insipid words of Moritz Horn, and lastly the *Chorballaden (Choral Ballads),* in which Schumann thought that he had discovered a new musical form, between the epic and the drama, with recitatives, solos, duets, trios, choruses, and orchestra; to this class belonged *Der Königssohn* (op. 116), written in 1851, *Des Sängers Fluch* (op. 139) and *Vom Pagen und der Königstochter (The Lay of the Page and the King's Daughter)* (op. 140) in the following year, with *Das Glück von Edenhall (The Luck of Edenhall)* (op. 143) in 1853. The list, as we can see, is still a considerable one. But, with the exception of the Sonata for piano and violin, not one of the works enumerated in it has survived, and they reveal an undoubted decline in the composer's creative power. They are no longer effusions welling forth from his soul with elemental, inevitable force, and worked out with all the intensity of emotion and temperamental ardour of which his nature was capable when it was once stirred, but productions

in which acquired technical skill and the almost mechanical habit of composition played the largest part.

This persistent work was interrupted by travelling. During the holidays of 1851 the Schumanns went by way of Bonn, Heidelberg, and Baden-Baden to Switzerland and Savoy, where they were enchanted by Basel and Geneva, but especially by Vevey and Chamonix, the view of Mont Blanc drawing cries of rapture from Robert. Next a choir competition took Schumann to Antwerp and gave him an opportunity of visiting Brussels. And on their return Liszt and the Princess Wittgenstein arrived to revolutionize Düsseldorf and the peaceful home-life of the two musicians.

But serious annoyances awaited Schumann after these refreshing weeks of holiday-making. Among the frivolous and superficial Rhinelanders the Schumanns had found even less than at Dresden of that religious respect for music which they demanded from amateurs, and to which they had grown accustomed in Leipzig. The choral society was not getting on very well, and its members not only were irregular in their attendance, but failed to show their director that deference which he had a right to expect. A quartet which he had tried to found could not be kept going; after two rehearsals he threw it up, because the artists whom he had brought together were so averse from all exacting work. For their part, the Düsseldorfers, spontaneous and fond of enjoyment, lovers of earth and all its most material gifts, had expected to find in their new musical director a bold and energetic Davidsbündler, who would gather into one great stream all the scattered music of their great river, their vine-

clad hill-sides, and their own temperament, which was so easily accessible to the sensuous charm of music; and they were quite unable to understand the taciturn reserve of "a man of the North and a Protestant who shunned society"—for such was Schumann, according to the acute analysis of his character by Hanslick, the great musical critic, who knew him so well and loved him so dearly. Though they admired his *Peri,* his symphonies, his chamber-music, his piano music, and his songs, they cared little for his recent works: the overture to the *Braut von Messina* was received without applause. Still less did they like his style of conducting: the eighth subscription concert, on March 13, 1851, was severely criticized by the press. And the concert committee, upon whom Schumann was dependent, finding, not without justice, that as a conductor he was lacking in firmness and had no control over his orchestra and choirs, began to ask themselves whether they had not been mistaken in their choice.

During the year 1851 this lack of harmony between Schumann and the musical world of Dűsseldorf had remained latent. By the very beginning of the new year, as though desirous of exhausting all musical forms, having finished *Des Sängers Fluch,* he started composing a *Mass* for four-part choir and orchestra (op. 147). Thanks to Liszt's unfailing zeal, he had the satisfaction of hearing his *Manfred* performed at Weimar, and he also conducted the B flat major Symphony at Dűsseldorf, where it was enthusiastically applauded. A short concert-tour to Leipzig also met with a splendid success. The *Manfred* overture in

particular was popular everywhere. Liszt and Joachim had come from Weimar, Richard Pohl from Dresden, and Meinardus from Berlin, and every evening there was a perfect debauch of music in some friend's drawing-room—among others, in that of old Moscheles. The Gewandhaus concert was less fortunate: though the B flat major Symphony was performed better than at Dresden and met with a great success, neither the A minor Sonata nor the G minor Trio was understood or appreciated. All the same, the two Schumanns returned home refreshed. Robert finished the *Mass,* besides which he composed a *Requiem* for chorus and orchestra (op. 148), the ballad cycle *Vom Pagen und der Kőnigstochter* (op. 140), the five *Gedichte der Kőnigin Maria Stuart* (op. 135), for solo voice with pianoforte accompaniment, and *Sechs Gesänge (Six Songs)* (op. 107) for mezzo-soprano and piano. But this was all, and for Schumann it was not much.

The interruption of his work was due to domestic troubles: the Schumanns had been obliged to move and had happened upon a house where the noise of piano-playing and of building near by drove the composer to desperation, so that they cancelled their lease and moved again, this time finding what they required. It was also due to Robert's health. Towards April he suffered from insomnia, caused by rheumatic pains, which had a prejudicial effect upon the state of his nerves. There was an improvement, after which his malady returned with redoubled violence. In order to elude its attacks the sick man went to Godesberg, where he took long walks in the Siebengebirge in the baking heat, which exhausted him to such an extent

that on July 2 he had a nervous break-down. He hurried home and took to bathing in the Rhine, which did him good, but towards the end of the month he felt his condition going from bad to worse. "Robert is terribly tormented by hypochondriacal ideas," wrote Clara on July 21. And so when, in the teeth of his doctor's advice, Schumann conducted his *Julius Cæsar* overture on the 30th at the Männergesangfest (Male Choir Festival), repeating it on August 3, together with the two *Fidelio* overtures, he paid for the strain by a recrudescence of his depression, and decided to try sea-bathing at Scheveningen. The sea did him good. By the end of a month he felt his strength returning, and towards the middle of September the Schumanns were able to go back to Düsseldorf, where, for the first time since their marriage, they found "a comfortable house, suited to the occupations of them both." Robert's study was very quiet, "so that he sits there as it were in a little box," and Clara had her music-room on the second storey, where she could play to her heart's content without disturbing her husband. But Schumann still suffered from fatigue, and towards the middle of October had fits of giddiness which alarmed him; but, the doctor having assured him that his fears were groundless, he recovered his peace of mind and resumed his usual activities at the end of November. His health was certainly more stable; yet on November 21 he noted: "Visit from Hiller. Curious auditory symptoms." This was the first slight beginning of those auditory hallucinations by which he was so grievously tormented.

During his illness Schumann had quite naturally

not troubled about preparations for the winter season. It was his colleague Tausch, an excellent musician, of whom, however, the Schumanns felt a justifiable distrust, who undertook the task of arranging and conducting the first two concerts. Both audience and press gave Schumann's deputy a welcome which was in curious contrast with the icy reception that greeted the composer when he returned to his post on December 3. The Schumanns believed this to be due to a deliberate scheme, and they were probably not mistaken, for on the 14th Robert unexpectedly received a letter from three members of the committee, in which they bluntly requested him to resign the position which he filled so badly. His friends intervened, and so did the authorities, a general meeting of the members of the Concert Society took Schumann's part, and the writers of this unlucky epistle were forced to make an abject apology. But this was a mere truce: the breach between Schumann on the one hand, and the orchestra, the choirs, the public, and the concert committee on the other, was irreparable. The committee tried to effect a compromise. On November 7 two of the members proposed that in future Schumann should conduct none but his own works, while Tausch should conduct the rest. The Schumanns were indignant. "What would I not have done," wrote Clara, "to be able to go off with Robert? But with children it is not so easy." Robert took the offensive: he intimated to the committee that he would not conduct the concerts during the coming season, and to Tausch that he would regard it as an unfriendly act if the latter accepted the task of replacing—or, rather, supplanting—him.

Tausch took no notice, and on November 10 Clara wrote in her diary: "Concert this evening; we stayed at home. Tausch conducting." The disagreement had now reached an acute stage, and since Schumann was municipal director of music to the city of Düsseldorf *(Städtischer Musikdirektor)*, the municipal council took cognizance of the matter and called upon all parties concerned to make a statement on the case at issue. Schumann's was quite short: In virtue of his contract, he said, he had to assume the direction of the choral society and the sacred and secular concerts. This contract dated from April 1 and was terminable annually, either party being bound to give notice three months in advance—that is to say, on October 1. Since the committee was rendering the discharge of his functions impossible and openly violating the stipulations of the contract, which reserved the sole direction of the concerts to him, he would exercise his right of handing in his resignation on October 1, 1854. The committee replied that an amicable proposal was not a breach of contract, and that, as a matter of fact, there had been no question of anything but the expression of a wish. It had to take into account its duty, not only to Schumann, which it was not aware that it had at any time failed to appreciate, but also to the members of the society and the public. It accordingly requested Schumann to continue to carry out the conditions upon which he had been engaged, while the committee, on its side, would still abide by them. It further resolved to request Herr Tausch to take charge of such of the concerts as Schumann should not

conduct during the season 1853–4, and to assume the directorship from the season 1854–5 onwards.

So the rupture had come; but it had been postponed for a year, and in the mean time Schumann's rights had been safeguarded. He therefore resolved to set on foot the preparations for the Rhenish Musical Festival which had been arranged for the spring, and resumed his work of composition. First came *Das Glück von Edenhall,* a choral ballad set to words by Uhland (op. 143), and then his *Fest-Ouvertüre* (with chorus on the *Rheinweinlied)* (op. 123), *Sieben Stücke in Fughettenform (Seven Pieces in Fughetta Form)* (op. 126), three *Klavier Sonaten für die Jugend* (op. 118), and lastly the *Faust* overture. The Musical Festival was a brilliant success. Though the *Fest-Ouvertüre* did not meet with the success that had been expected, the D minor Symphony, on the other hand, brought him such applause as he had never before received in the Rhineland. But the prince of the festival had been Joachim, whose performance of the Beethoven concerto had aroused indescribable enthusiasm in his audience. The little prodigy who had once taken Clara's place at a concert at Dresden when she was indisposed had developed into the leading violinist of the day. The Schumanns found in him the same religious conception of the musical art as they themselves cherished, but which seemed to them to have become increasingly rare. He had sent them his *Hamlet* overture, which had delighted them by the "deep artistic seriousness" revealed in the composer's work. They accordingly became deeply attached to the young musician. He had returned at the end of

August to spend the rest of his holidays with Robert and Clara, and he had a perfect cult of them both, of which Fate was to offer him the opportunity of giving practical proofs during the short time that still remained for Robert to live, and also during the long years in which he was to stand by Clara's side in their progress through life.

Though very tiring, the festival had brought Schumann a feeling of refreshment. On July 30 he imagined himself to have had an apoplectic seizure during an excursion to Bonn, though the doctors diagnosed it as nothing but lumbago; and about August 30 he had some difficulty in speaking; yet the summer of 1854 was one of the best he ever spent. Schumann seemed full of a serenity, and even a happy vitality, that we have rarely had to note in the course of his life. "Robert is so cheerful that I am really cheered by contact with him," noted Clara on September 10. And the day before the anniversary of their wedding-day she wrote: "Can a more beautiful wedding-anniversary be imagined than one celebrated with a beloved and loving husband at one's side, and six lively, well-grown children around one! My heart is full of thanksgiving for all these rich blessings. May Heaven preserve this happiness to us for a long time to come!" The festivities on their wedding-day, September 4, were a success in every way. Robert presented Clara with a fine piano; the moment she entered her music-room, where it had been set up during her absence, she was greeted by the strains of a song, the words of which had been written for her by her young husband thirteen years before, and to which he had just composed an

accompaniment, while on the piano she found lying the latest fruits of her faithful companion's inspiration: a *Konzert-Allegro* (with Introduction) for piano and orchestra (op. 134), dedicated to Clara, a *Phantasie* for violin with orchestral accompaniment (op. 131), dedicated to Joachim, the *Faust* overture, and the score of *Faust*, together with arrangements of it for piano solo and piano duet. Is it surprising that Clara, in transports of happiness, wrote in her diary: "Perhaps it sounds presumptuous to say so, but is it not true that I am the happiest woman on earth?"

And another happiness was now added to all these others. On September 30 Schumann noted in his diary: "Herr Brahms from Hamburg." And from this date till November 2 the diaries of both husband and wife are full of nothing else. Brahms was twenty years of age and was as handsome as a young god descended from Valhalla, with his long, fair hair and his great blue eyes—poor and awkward, yet overflowing with happy vitality and genius. To Schumann, who had never had the joy of coming across a musical talent congenial to his own since his separation from Mendelssohn, Brahms seemed to be "sent by God." Robert and Clara were never tired of hearing him play, and especially of hearing him play his own compositions. They invited all their friends to share this treat, and their contentment was at its height when, towards the middle of the month, Joachim came and joined them. Bettina von Arnim, Goethe's "child," was passing through, and took part in these feasts of art. It was like living once again through those years of joyous tumult when Schumann had recruited so many val-

iant comrades for the fight against the Philistines. But this time it was not for the struggle against the Philistines, but against the "Weimar Evangelists" (a term used by Schumann in a letter of October 7, 1852 to an unknown correspondent, J. de B.), the neo-German *(Neudeutsch)* school of Liszt and Wagner. It is true that he had helped to bring this school into being; but, like so many musicians in earlier days, he did not recognize the fruits of his own teaching in the works of musicians who drew their origin from him. He thought, quite rightly, that he had found a wonderful companion-in-arms for this struggle. The circumstances were so strikingly similar that he quite naturally began thinking of the *Zeitschrift* once more, though he had not written for it for the last ten years, and though, under the editorship of Franz Brendel, it had come out definitely on the side of the *Neudeutschen.* He now wrote a last article, entitled "*Neue Bahnen* (New Paths)," in which he announced "the flight of the eagle." For a long time, he wrote, he had been waiting for a musician who should have received the vocation of expressing the loftiest aspirations of their age in an ideal manner, an artist who should not "arrive at maturity by gradual stages, but, like Minerva, spring fully armed from the head of Kronios [Jove]." This chosen artist was Johannes Brahms. In his sonatas, which were like "veiled symphonies," in his songs, his piano pieces, his chamber-music, was manifested a remarkable and manifold genius, in which grace was wedded to strength. This was "he who was to come," the Messiah, "whose revelations would only be understood by the Pharisees long years afterwards,"

and "whose cradle had been watched over by the Graces and heroes." We can easily imagine with what feelings Brendel printed this article, which ran counter to his own tendencies, and in which, in enumerating the artists who had prepared the way for this man of destiny, Schumann mentioned, alongside of Joachim, Theodor Kirchner, Niels W. Gade, and Robert Franz, obscure names such as those of Ernst Naumann, Ludwig Norman, Woldemar Bargiel, Julius Schäffer, Albert Dietrich, C. V. Mongold, and C. F. Wilsing, while omitting to mention the names of Berlioz, Wagner, and Liszt. But, carried away by the joy of discovering a real genius, Schumann little cared what scandal might be caused by his cry of admiration. And, as though to set the seal on the alliance, he wrote a sonata in A minor for the violin in collaboration with this chosen genius and Albert Dietrich, which was dedicated to Joachim when, on October 27, he came to take part in the first subscription concert of the season 1853–4, but which has never been published in full.

On November 2 silence once again fell on the household in the Bilkerstrasse. Stimulated by this month crowded with music, Schumann was finishing the works which he had in hand: five "*Frühgesänge,*" and the *Märchenerzählungen,* four pieces for piano, clarinet, and viola (op. 132). The breach with Düsseldorf being now complete, Robert and Clara were once again faced with the vexed question of where to take up their residence. They decided upon Vienna, towards which they had always inclined; but they agreed to do nothing in a hurry. First of all, they had to visit Holland, where a concert tour had been or-

ganized for them. They started out on November 26 and gave concerts at Utrecht, The Hague, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and again at The Hague. The success that greeted them was overwhelming, not only for Clara's playing, which was usual, but for Robert's works too. The B flat major and C major symphonies, the *Konzert-Allegro,* the A minor Concerto, *Der Rose Pilgerfahrt,* were loudly applauded. The public and musicians of Holland, among the latter Verhulst, a Schumann enthusiast, gave him a cordial reception. And Clara, with satisfaction not unmingled with resentment, compared the treatment which the great musician had received from the people of Düsseldorf with that given him by the Dutch. The only discordant note was struck at court. The Schumanns were treated so cavalierly at an evening party given by Prince Frederick that they walked out of the room. Their host had asked Robert whether he was a musician too, and, on receiving an answer in the affirmative, had added: "What instrument do you play?"

They were back again in Düsseldorf by Christmas, but not for long. The new year, the "terrible year" 1854, opened under the most promising auspices. Joachim and Brahms invited them to Hanover, where they were themselves staying, and arranged a concert for them. The Schumanns accepted the invitation, though Clara was expecting another child and beginning to dread the fatigues of travel. The concert was a brilliant success. The D minor Symphony and the *Phantasie,* magnificently interpreted by Joachim, aroused wild applause. Of the two concerts which Clara gave at court, one was almost entirely devoted to the works

of Schumann, by special command of the King, who had expressed his admiration for them to the composer. They returned on the 30th, and Schumann gave himself up to literary work: on the one hand to the publication of the principal articles which he had written for the *Zeitschrift,* and on the other hand to the collection of an anthology *(Dichtergarten)* in which it was his intention to bring together all that poets and men of letters had said about music; the Bible, Plato, Goethe, Schiller, Jean Paul, Hoffmann, but, above all, Shakspere, provided him with the richest spoils. On February 8 Clara expressed some anxiety at seeing him reading Latin and Greek after such a long time. On the 6th he had written a fine letter to Joachim, in which our attention is, however, arrested by such passages as the following: "I have often written to you with sympathetic ink, and between these lines, too, there is a secret writing which will afterwards be revealed. . . . Music is silent at present, externally at least. . . . And now I must close. Night is beginning to fall. . . ."

And night was indeed falling—a thick darkness, full of unspeakable terrors. Implacable fate was silently working itself out. For months past Schumann had been, or, rather, appeared to be, in perfect health. His wife had noticed a state of well-being, gaiety, and good spirits in him which inspired her with nothing but joyful confidence. Apart from the three great nervous crises through which he passed in the years 1833, 1838, and 1844, we have noted in Schumann, in the course of our narrative, a mental instability, an alterna-

tion between good spirits and depression in which the depressed mood predominated, an uneasiness, a mental anguish, a disinclination to talk, and, at times, a curious passiveness, which were no doubt a necessary part of his artistic temperament, and, as it were, the price that he paid for it and for the overstrain to which he had subjected himself; during recent years these had been aggravated by auditory hallucinations of a somewhat alarming nature. But there was another and more serious symptom that we have not noted—more serious because, this time, it concerned, not his sensibility, the very essence of which was, so to speak, vibrant, tremulous, and fluctuating, but his intellectual faculties. Schumann had a sane intelligence and a firm understanding, devoid of any mystical element. In spite of his idealism, he never lost touch with reality. And as he advanced from youth to maturity, he turned away from Jean Paul's ecstatic reveries and Hoffmann's macabre visions, becoming more attached to Goethe, Shakspere, and Hebbel, all three of whom remain faithful servants of the "spirit of earth," even in their most audacious flights into the empyrean.

And now, in 1853, he began to take a passionate interest in table-turning, which could not fail to strike onlookers as odd. "In May 1853," relates Wasielewski, "I stopped at Düsseldorf and entered Schumann's room one afternoon. He was lying on a sofa, reading a book. I asked him what the volume was about, and he answered excitedly, in a very high-pitched voice: 'Do you know anything about table-turning?' 'Certainly I do.' Upon this his eyes, which he usually kept half-closed, opened quite wide. The pupils dilated

enormously, and he began to laugh with an expression at once inspired and mournful, saying: 'The tables know everything!' When I saw that he was speaking quite seriously, I was careful not to contradict him, and he grew calmer. He then called his second daughter and began to try experiments with a little table." And if we distrust the testimony of Wasielewski, here is an effusion of Schumann's own. "What a marvellous power!" he wrote to one of his friends on April 25, 1853. "Only think, I asked the table how the rhythm of the first two bars of the C minor Symphony went. It hesitated longer than usual before replying, but at last it began [tapping out the phrase], a little slowly at first. When I said: 'But the *tempo* is quicker, dear table,' it hastened to tap out the real *tempo*. I also asked it whether it could tell me the number which I had in mind. We were all beside ourselves with astonishment, as though surrounded by miracles." And on October 17 we read among the notes in his diary: "Attempt to call up spirits, which did not succeed." Clara recorded three seances without seeing anything extraordinary or alarming in them. "Robert was quite happy [to occupy himself with table-turning], as he always is when he is not feeling very well. As soon as he begins to practise it, he feels well and pleasantly over-excited." And again she writes quite seriously: "Robert is delighted with this miraculous force and has ended by becoming fond of the little table and has promised it a new cover." She had not grasped the fact that this denoted a weakening of his intellectual power, just as she had not noticed that he now spoke,

not only infrequently, but slowly, thickly, and with difficulty.

The crisis, then, was less unexpected than those immediately surrounding the sick man believed. However that may be, it was cruelly abrupt. It started during the night between February 10 and 11. "Violent and painful auditory symptoms," noted Schumann in his pocket-book. And Clara wrote: "On the night between Friday the 10th and Saturday the 11th Robert suffered so much from an affection of his hearing that he did not close his eyes all night. He heard the same note sounding all the time. . . ." On the 11th Schumann wrote: "A wretched night (suffering from my hearing and my head). Went with Dietrich to the library." So there was an improvement, for the sick man went out, and the notes which he himself made on his health were perfectly rational in their brevity. On the 12th he wrote: "Still worse, but in a wonderful way? [*wunderbar;* the punctuation is Schumann's] *Ein fest Burg* appears [a strong fortress; the opening words of Luther's hymn *Ein' feste Burg*]." The word "*wunderbar,*" as used by Robert Schumann, means both strange and marvellous. In any case it signifies something delightful. This music, which he could no longer help hearing, seemed to him wonderfully lovely after he had ceased to be obsessed by it. These hallucinations were accompanied by visions which produced an emotional reaction of joy and happiness. After noting that the night between the 11th and the 12th had been as bad as the one before, and that Robert's sufferings had ceased only for two hours during the day, Clara wrote: "My poor Robert

suffers horribly! All noises sound like music to him! He says it is such splendid music, with instruments of a marvellous tone, such as were never heard upon earth. But it naturally tells upon him terribly. The doctor said he could do absolutely nothing." On the 13th Schumann again recorded: "Wondrous sufferings." On the 14th: "During the day I was spared to a certain extent. Towards evening very violent, making music *(musiciren)* (Wonderfully beautiful music)." The sufferer seemed to be losing his sense of syntax. On the 15th he wrote: "Time of suffering. Dr. Hasenclever." On the 16th: "No better. All poems collected." On the 17th: "Better." From this time onward nothing more is recorded in the note-book except his expenditure. Never again was Schumann's writing to appear in this note-book, in which he had noted the day's harvest day by day. And all that Clara wrote further was: "The following nights [after the 12th] were very bad. We hardly slept. . . . In the day-time he tried to work, but only succeeded at the cost of terrible efforts. He said several times that if this did not stop, it would destroy his reason. . . . The auditory symptoms have become so intense that he heard whole pieces, as though played by a full orchestra. . . ." Then silence fell on her too, and she did not take up her record again till five weeks later, in April, when all was over.

"On the night of the 17th, when we had not long gone to bed, Robert got up again and wrote down a theme, which he said the angels were singing to him. When he had finished, he went back to bed, and his fancy wandered during the whole night, his eyes being

opened, gazing heavenwards all the time; he was firmly convinced that angels were hovering round him and making him the most glorious revelations, all in wonderful music. They were calling to us to welcome us, he said; we should both of us be with them together before the year was out. . . . In the morning there was a terrible change. . . . The angelic voices turned to demon voices, accompanied by horrible music; they cried out to him that he was a sinner, and they would cast him into hell; in short, his condition increased into a regular nervous paroxysm; he screamed with pain (for, as he told me afterwards, they had fallen upon him in the form of tigers and hyenas, and seized hold of him), and two doctors, who had fortunately arrived in time, could hardly hold him. . . . Half an hour later he became quieter and thought he could distinguish more friendly voices again, promising him courage. The doctors put him to bed, and he stayed there contentedly for a few hours; then he got up again and corrected his violoncello concerto; by doing this he said that he got a little relief from the incessant sound of voices." On the 19th, "he spent the day in bed, terribly tormented by evil spirits. It was impossible to convince him that he was not surrounded by heavenly and infernal beings; he believed me when I told him he was ill . . . but said to me several times in a piteous voice: 'You will believe, dear Clara, that I am not telling you untruths?' At eleven o'clock he suddenly became quieter; the angels had promised him that he should sleep. . . . On the 20th Robert spent the whole day at his writing-desk . . . listening to the angel voices; then he would often write a few

words, but very little, and then listen again. His eyes were full of a rapture that I can never forget." On the 21st he was again delirious all night: "He kept saying all the time that he was a criminal and must constantly read the Bible. . . . I noticed that his condition was generally more agitated when he read the Bible, and this led me to the idea that by reading it when he was collecting passages for his *Dichtergarten* he had perhaps steeped himself too deeply in things which confused his mind, for his sufferings were almost consistently of a religious order, a regular overexcitement." The delirium continued on the following days. And the mechanical impulse towards artistic work was so strong in him that he wrote some variations on the "marvellously touching and truly pious" theme in E flat major that he had composed during the night of the 10th, which are included, as No. 9, in the supplement to the critical edition of his works. He also wrote two letters. But that night he asked Clara to leave him, for fear that he might do her harm. He said farewell to Clara and made arrangements for the disposal of his fortune and works. On the 25th he felt better and played a young musician's sonata to Dietrich in the evening with such joyful enthusiasm that the perspiration dripped from his brow; and he ate his supper with a good appetite. "At half past nine in the evening he rose from the sofa abruptly and asked for his clothes; he wanted to go to a lunatic asylum, he said, he was no longer able to control himself and could not answer for what he might do." The doctor persuaded him to go to bed and sent for a male nurse, with whom Schumann conversed quite rationally;

then he read the papers and dozed a little. On the next day, the 26th, he got up, but he was in a state of profound melancholy. If Clara touched him, he would exclaim: "Oh, Clara! I am not worthy of your love." He was in the middle of copying out the last of the Variations when, taking advantage of a momentary absence of his wife, who had left him with their elder daughter, he sighed and went into his bedroom, from which he then rushed out without boots or waistcoat into the pouring rain. His absence was noticed at once, and Dietrich and Dr. Hasenclever, who were there, rushed out to look for him, but could not find him, "until," as Clara wrote about an hour later, "two strangers brought him home; I could never find out where and how they had found him. . . . But, unhappy that I am, I never saw him again! After they had put him to bed at home, they did not want to excite him by letting him see me again." The circumstances which had been hidden from Clara, whose pregnancy made it necessary to spare her agitation, were as follows: Driven by mental anguish, Schumann had gone straight to the bridge over the Rhine and thrown himself into the river. Some boatmen had jumped in after him, and managed to reach him and bring him to the shore. The necessary precautions were at last taken; Clara was not allowed to see him, and the sick man was given two keepers, with whom he got on very well. He showed no anxiety about Clara and declared himself content when he knew that she was at a friend's house. On the 28th he was standing at his desk all day. He sent Clara the fair copy of the Variations, with a message asking her to play them

to the friend who was entertaining her. On March 1 he had another attack. He was put to bed, and his family and friends were all kept away from him. He never ceased begging the doctors to take him to a lunatic asylum, for there alone he thought that he might be cured. And, with the consent of Clara, they resigned themselves to the inevitable. On the 3rd Brahms came from Hanover to be at Clara's side in her bitter trouble. On March 4, a bright, sunshiny day, Schumann was removed to the establishment kept by Dr. Richarz at Bonn.

The tragedy aroused the deepest consternation and active sympathy among Schumann's friends. Clara's mother had hurried to the spot on first hearing the bad news; Brahms was there, Joachim arrived from Hanover on the 5th, and Grimm a little later; then Hiller came from Cologne, and Avé Lallemant from Hamburg to express their condolences with the composer's wife. Clara, however, displayed her accustomed courage. As early as the 5th she started "her beloved music" again—the only thing which brought her any consolation—and by the 6th she resumed her lessons; in future she was the sole support of her seven children, and she had no time to be idle. The municipality of Bonn informed her, moreover, of its intention of maintaining Schumann in his post and continued to pay her his salary. And Paul Mendelssohn, Felix's brother, sent her a considerable sum, which she did not touch, and restored in full, but which secured her against all contingencies.

The first news that arrived from Endenich, on the

10th, and the reports brought by Clara's mother, who had gone to visit him there, showed that his condition was unchanged: Robert remained in bed most of the time, took a walk twice a day, and conversed amicably with the doctors when he was not troubled with mental anguish. About the 20th Dr. Richarz's assistant sent word that at last there was an improvement, but that his mental anguish often returned, and then he would walk up and down the room restlessly, sometimes even kneeling and wringing his hands. Towards the end of the month the bulletins became more encouraging: the patient had been picking violets. On April 10th Dr. Hasenclever returned from Bonn bringing the Endenich doctor's assurances that "the first step had been made towards recovery." He could not guarantee a cure, however, unless the improvement lasted for several weeks without a relapse. On the 30th Schumann's progress underwent a check; the hallucinations reappeared, and the patient was silent and depressed. On May 14 there was a fresh improvement; a fortnight had gone by without an attack, but on the 16th there was a relapse, with hallucinations and delirium. He had not inquired about his family once since his arrival. On the 28th, after a fresh period of improvement, there was another relapse, followed by a fresh intermission of his malady. On June 6th the report said that there had been no hallucinations or mental anguish or delirium and that certain of the patient's questions proved that he was beginning to recall the past. And at last, on July 21, Clara, who on June 11 had given birth to a son, to whom she had given the name Felix in memory of Mendelssohn,

received a palpable sign that Robert remembered her: he had gathered some flowers and asked that they should be sent to her from him.

And from this time onwards, the ray of light piercing the darkness which had descended on Schumann's reason seemed to grow stronger. His physical health was excellent, and, according to a friend who had seen him from behind a curtain, he looked fresh and gay. On August 13 Grimm wrote that he, too, had seen the patient and heard him speak. Robert had just returned from the cemetery at Bonn and was telling the doctor how he had visited the tombs of Niebuhr and of Schiller's son, and he had talked of them in an absolutely normal way. His eyes were clear and gentle and he had grown fatter. Dr. Peters, the assistant of Dr. Richarz, had said that the attacks of excitement and the hallucinations were becoming less frequent. Schumann had visited the Natural History Museum and had been interested in it. But the doctor noted lapses of memory —the patient could not remember what he had been doing an hour previously—and of reasoning power: from the fact that he could see Bonn Cathedral from the park at Endenich the patient concluded that he ought to be able to distinguish the Beethoven monument. Moreover, he was still taciturn, and imagined that he was being persecuted: on the previous day he had thought that the wine with which he was served was poisoned, and poured it on the ground. The doctor hoped for a cure, but could not say how long it would take, and believed that it would be a slow one. On August 19 it was Brahms who made the sad pilgrimage and wrote an account of his impressions to

Clara, who had gone to Ostend to try to recover from all the indescribable suffering which that year had brought her and collect the strength which her cruel fate rendered necessary. Schumann had not changed, wrote Brahms: his glance was clear and friendly. His movements had remained the same and were even freer and less constrained than usual. He had recognized which were his own in a collection of songs, besides a head by Raphael and the portraits of Schiller and Goethe. The auditory hallucinations, however, still persisted.

Clara was forbidden to see her beloved and suffering husband, and during the six months for which the tragic separation had lasted, she had had nothing to comfort her but the presence of Brahms and the music which she had made with him. By the doctor's advice, she now decided to write to Robert, on September 12, the anniversary of their marriage. And, miracle of miracles, Robert replied! It was like the voice of Lazarus escaping from the shadows of death, a voice that was still rather faint and bore the stamp of a profound melancholy, but the words which it pronounced were perfectly coherent. He inquired about his manuscripts and scores and his collection of autographs. And he added: "Could I but see you once and talk to you! But the road is still too long. I should like to hear so much what sort of life you are leading, where you are living, and whether you still play as marvellously as in the old days. . . . Have you still all the letters I have written you and the words of love I sent you from Vienna to Paris? . . . Oh, how gladly I would hear your wonderful playing! Is it a dream

that we were in Holland last winter?" On the 18th he wrote again. He reminded Clara of tender memories, of their travels; of Lausanne, Vevey, Chamonix, the Alps, Antwerp, Brussels, and Holland. He asked her to send him a volume of her diary and a copy of his love-letters from Vienna. He also asked her for the portrait of them both, and the dates of their children's birthdays. He told her how happy he was that Brahms had settled in Düsseldorf, inquired about his work and that of Joachim, sent affectionate remembrances to the children, and expressed his fear that Clara would overtire herself. On September 26 he thanked Clara for her answer and asked in what church the new baby was to be baptized. On November 16 Joachim sent word to Liszt that Schumann had written to him; the letter, he said, was full of kindliness and attachment to his friends; he seemed to have awakened from a bad dream. On the 27th it was Brahms who received a letter from Schumann, which was perfectly coherent and showed a complete intellectual mastery. It ran as follows: "My dear, If only I could go to you myself and see and hear you once more, and hear your splendid Variations on a theme by Schumann in F sharp minor—or else played by Clara, about whose wonderful performances Joachim has written to me. With what unique art the whole is rounded off, how well one knows you by the rich brilliance of imagination and again by the profound art, such as I had never known in you before! The theme appearing here and there, so mysteriously, and then again with such passion and intensity. . . . And how glorious is the close at the end of the fourteenth, so skilfully worked out

in a canon at the second! And the fifteenth in G flat major, with its second part so full of genius, and the last! And next, dear Johannes, I have to thank you for all your kindness and goodness to my Clara; she constantly writes to me about it." On the 15th there was another letter to Brahms. It begins with the heart-rending cry: "Ah, if only I could celebrate Christmas with you!" Next he again speaks to him about his Variations, with a fatherly kindness which finds expression in a spontaneous use, prompted by his affection, of the intimate "*Du.*" He asked Brahms to let him see his latest works. And he said how much he would like to see Hamburg again, concluding with the melancholy reflection: "We have not seen each other since Hanover. Ah, those were happy days!"

On January 6, 1855 he thanked Clara for sending the first version of the young Hamburg composer's sonata and his *Ballades,* adding that the latter had a glorious, demonic beauty. On the 11th Brahms spent four hours with Schumann, playing to him or joining him in piano duets; on his way back the sick man accompanied him as far as Bonn and showed him the cathedral and the Beethoven monument. But after the first quarter of an hour of the interview Schumann began to talk to him in great distress of what had been whispered to him by the angels, confusing it with what the doctor had said to him. On February 23 Brahms once more visited Endenich. Schumann received him as cordially as he had done the first time, and this visit passed off without an outbreak of nervous excitement. Brahms had taken him a portrait of Clara, which he received with every sign of deep

emotion, murmuring: "Ah! How long I have been wanting this!" He had been composing some fugues, he said, but he would not show them because he had not put the final touches to them. He asked that a musical review might be sent to him, and talked about his own *Zeitschrift,* whose tendencies and attitudes had undergone such a profound modification. He praised Joachim with an enthusiasm only equalled by that which he displayed for Clara's talent. He desired with all his heart to leave Endenich. There was no trace of confusion in anything he said. On the 11th, and, no doubt, on the 12th or 13th, he wrote to Clara, Brahms, Joachim, and Simrock, one of his publishers. The letter to Brahms was quite a long and interesting one. He told the young musician that he was just going to write to Hărtel, the publisher, and recommend several of Brahms's works to him, especially the *Romances* for violoncello and piano, the *Ballades,* and the *Scherzo.* He asked if Clara would send him his *Studies on the Caprices of Paganini* and some music-paper. He had been delighted, he said, to receive the arrangement for piano duet of the *Fest-Ouvertűre* on the *Rheinweinlied.* On March 20 (the date is not certain) there was another letter to Brahms,his favourite correspondent, for whom he showed an extraordinary admiration and affection. He thanked his young friend for sending him his Second Sonata, in F sharp minor. After reading it through, he was full of gratitude and delight. He analysed the various parts and said that the whole was worthy of a laurel crown. He spoke of the work he was himself doing on the Paganini *Caprices,* and drew his attention to Joachim's Variations for

piano and viola, which likewise seemed to him work of the highest order. In conclusion, without any thought of himself, he asked Brahms whether he was applying for the post of musical director at Düsseldorf, which, according to one of the reviews, had just been declared vacant.

All this seemed perfectly rational and reassuring. Unfortunately, on January 11 Clara had received a letter written under the influence of the most racking mental anguish: "My Clara, I feel as though a terrible danger were threatening me! Oh, the thought that I shall never see you again, you and the children!" So the evil spirits had not been exorcized. When speaking about music, Schumann was perfectly normal, and since he discussed nothing with Brahms and Joachim but the art which they had in common, the letters which he wrote to them bore no trace of his disordered ideas. With Clara he abandoned all restraint. Thus on Brahms's birthday, May 7, he sent him the autograph manuscript of the *Braut von Messina* overture, with a few affectionate words. On April 22 Clara herself received "the most beautiful of all letters," while at Hamburg. He had received a visit from Bettina, he said, which had given him great pleasure. He wanted to arrange Joachim's *Henry IV* overture for piano duet, and he was working a great deal. But on May 7, while she was happily celebrating Brahms's birthday, Robert wrote her the following letter, the last he ever wrote:

Dear Clara,

On May 1 I sent you a messenger of spring, but the following days were very agitated; you shall hear more about

this from the letter which you will receive the day after tomorrow. A shadow hovers over it, but the rest of its contents will give you pleasure, my darling.

I did not know about our loved one's birthday; and so I must put on wings, so that the letter I am sending may arrive tomorrow too, with the score.

I enclose the drawing of Felix Mendelssohn, so that you may put it in the album. It is a priceless souvenir.

Farewell, my beloved!

Your

ROBERT.

Are the words which I have underlined a mere figure of speech, or are they an allusion to his communion with the angels? However that may be, on the following day, the 8th, the doctor sent bad news: the patient was suffering from mental anguish, sleeping badly, and troubled by auditory hallucinations. Towards the middle of May, however, Bettina von Arnim saw him and sent Clara her impressions. She had been delighted to hear, she said, that Schumann was about to join his family again; only the transition ought not to be too sudden. She had found him full of happy vitality; he had himself drawn his visitor's attention to the difficulty which he had in expressing himself; the reason was, he said, that for the last year he had lost the habit of conversation. He then recalled memories of Vienna, St. Petersburg, London, and Sicily, and spoke enthusiastically about the works of Brahms and Joachim. He had shown himself just, kindly, and full of ardent affection for his pupils, and he strained every nerve to maintain his self-control. But how difficult it was for him, cut off as he was

from all that might be salutary and encouraging to him! It was quite clear that his sudden illness had been nothing but a nervous crisis, which would have ended much sooner if he had been better understood, or if anyone had even guessed what was troubling his mind. But his physician, Dr. Richarz, was incapable of any such thing. He was a hypochondriac, who did not understand Schumann's nobility of soul, and even took it for a symptom of disease.

Greatly disturbed by this opinion (which was, moreover, the outcome of an impassioned imagination, incapable of giving things or people their true significance), and wondering whether the doctor and the asylum had not been badly chosen, Clara sent Joachim to Endenich. He found the patient in a state of extreme agitation, and the doctor was opposed to all change of scene. A few days later Clara herself talked to Dr. Richarz, who still maintained that the patient would be cured. On September 4 Clara implored Robert to write to her. The doctor replied in his stead, declaring that henceforward all hope of a cure had vanished.

From this time onwards, all trace of Schumann seems, as it were, to vanish. Clara's journal, too, is silent. Slowly darkness falls upon our hero's form. In February 1856 Brahms had the idea of transferring the sick man to a hydropathic establishment. But a visit to Endenich convinced him that Schumann could not be moved. Brahms saw him again on May 10, but Robert took hardly any notice of him and did nothing but look for interchangeable names in an atlas. On

July 14 Dr. Richarz declared that he had no more than a year to live.

Happily the end was nearer than this. On July 23 Clara received the following telegram: "If you wish to find your husband still alive, come at once. The sight of him is indeed horrifying." She responded to the summons, accompanied by Brahms, but yielded to his persuasion and did not see her dying husband. She returned to Endenich on the 27th, and this time met the husband whom she had not seen since he had been taken there—that is to say, for two years. "I saw him in the evening, between six and seven. He smiled at me and put his arm round me with great difficulty, for he had almost lost all control of his limbs. Never shall I forget that moment. I would not give that embrace for all the treasures on earth. My Robert, it was thus that we had to meet again! How painfully had I to try to distinguish your beloved features! What pain it was to look upon you so!" He seemed to be conversing with spirits and said things which were unintelligible to her. Once only, Clara thought she could distinguish the word "my" and "I recognize." On the following day his sufferings had no respite. "His limbs were constantly racked by convulsions, and he cried aloud." Finally, two days afterwards, about four o'clock in the afternoon, he fell peacefully asleep. He was buried on the 31st, in the cemetery at Bonn. Brahms, Joachim, and Ferdinand Hiller accompanied him to his last resting-place. And the chants of the funeral service soothed his mortal remains to rest for ever.

Epilogue

Clara.—Clara and Brahms.—The Growing Fame of Schumann's Music

I HAVE NOT INTERRUPTED MY ACCOUNT OF THE catastrophe by any remarks of my own, but have left Schumann to speak, so long as his voice was to be heard, and Clara too. All comment seemed to me useless. To see such a rich, noble, pure soul succumbing, not to death, which, though cruel, is in accordance with the normal laws of existence, but to madness, seems like one of those stupid outrages to which Nature so often, alas, subjects her finest creations. As we record them we may either rebel and curse fate, or resign ourselves to the impotence of man when faced with the implacable, irrational forces which crush him; or, again, we may ask, with the poet, whether these forces are not all part of those unknown things "into which the suffering of man enters as an element." But better than all these questions, to which there is no reply, is silence.

Neither shall I attempt a hypothetical diagnosis of Schumann's malady. I shall not reproduce the results of the autopsy. I shall not compare the divergent opinions of the specialists in mental disease who have examined Schumann's case. Whatever name we may give to his malady, one thing seems to me certain; and that is, that the vibrant, breathless, painful tension of his art—followed by a divinely suave relaxation—is

connected by some secret but indissoluble bond with the mysterious visitation from which he never ceased to suffer and of which the final crisis was simply the inevitable culmination.

Is is possible to use the same discretion with regard to Clara? She had lived in such close communion with her husband, their lives had been so intimately mingled, that, having completed the life of Schumann, it seems impossible not to pursue the story of her long and glorious existence. But this would form the subject of another book, and one which B. Litzmann has written as well as it could possibly have been done. But is it not my duty at least to try to throw light upon the relations between Clara and Brahms, which, starting during Schumann's last agony, grew closer and closer after his death—to such a point that she herself felt it necessary to write in her diary that those who maligned them were incapable of understanding their pure beauty?

We know that the friendship between Clara and Brahms provoked amazement in her best friends and gave rise to much censorious comment. And I must confess that those who, like us, have followed Schumann's life with such a passion of sympathy that his sufferings and tragic end have moved us like those of one near and dear to us, feel a little astonishment at Clara's attitude towards this young man, fourteen years younger than herself. She expressed a boundless admiration for him, deferred humbly to his opinion, and travelled and went on gay excursions with him—quite apart from the musical interests which they quite legitimately shared; while, for his part, Brahms

followed her like her shadow, wrote her letters which became more and more tender, caressing, and ardent, in which the conventional "you *(Sie)*" is succeeded by the intimate "thou *(Du)*," and in which the passion which he at first kept under by a violent effort could at last no longer be silent, and was allowed to find expression (see, for example, in the *Correspondence* between Clara and Johannes, the letters of March 8 and 12, 1855, and those of February 5 and May 31, 1856). And, since we involuntarily put ourselves in Schumann's place, we cannot help feeling what is almost a jealous resentment. We could have wished that Clara had immured herself in her grief as in a tower of refuge, without depriving the husband who was left in confinement, at the mercy of his dark imaginings, of even a portion of the affection which she owed him, for the benefit of anyone else.

As to the nature of the attachment which she had for Brahms, who can venture to judge? Quite recently a direct descendant of the Schumanns has gone so far as to assert that Brahms was the father of the youngest child, born at a time when darkness had already fallen upon Clara's husband—which is certainly a vile posthumous calumny. Since the year 1926 we have had before us the correspondence between Clara and Brahms, which was only known before from the extracts given by Litzmann. We can thus reconstitute, seemingly at least, the story of their relations from February 10, 1854, when Brahms wrote to her for the first time, to tell her that he was dedicating his sonata to her, to May 7, 1856, thirteen days before the death of his incomparable friend. But I repeat—seemingly.

For, as a matter of fact, when the two friends agreed, in 1886, to return each other's letters, Clara destroyed all hers up to that date, while Brahms, for his part, threw all his into the Rhine. Those which we still have —and which fill an enormous volume—were left by him to Clara, because they were particularly dear to her. On the other hand, it is not absolutely certain that B. Litzmann, who started preparing the book for publication, and Marie Schumann, who completed it, have published all the surviving letters.

Those that have come down to us justify us in saying this much: in Brahms's feelings towards Clara, which were undoubtedly shared—or, at least, in the expression of these feelings—there is what we may call a crescendo, culminating in the letter of May 31, 1856, to which I have already referred. It begins as follows: "My beloved Clara, I wish I could write to you *(Dir)* as tenderly as I love you, and do all the kindly, loving things for you that I wish you. You are so infinitely dear to me that I cannot express it. I could call you 'darling' all the time, and every possible loving name, and never have enough of these endearments"; and it contains the beautiful cry: "Your letters are like kisses to me." Then, slowly, gently, and imperceptibly, there follows a diminuendo. The tone of Brahms's letters, though still impassioned, becomes calmer. He still sends her letters like kisses, but they are no longer those of 1856. By 1858 the diminuendo is obvious. Clara writes on July 1: "Might I but speak of your folk-songs as my heart desires! But I feel more and more that I must learn to place it under restraint. . . . Stay quietly at Hamburg, if you feel strongly

disposed to work . . . and I will come and see you there later." And again on December 20: "But I should like to imagine that things are just as they used to be once, when I could confide every movement of my heart to you in perfect trust . . . I think, all the same, that when you wrote that piece, you were thinking of me." Whereas it had formerly been Brahms who had turned towards her with such ardent longing, her attitude was now that of an abandoned lover.

What had taken place between these two dates? In order to speak with any certitude we should require to see the letters that Clara destroyed. We therefore have to guess. Our conjectures fluctuate between the two following theories: either Brahms and Clara were lover and mistress, and after possessing her the man became conscious of the difference of age that separated them; or else Brahms allowed himself to be carried away one day by an attraction which, from being merely affectionate, had turned to passion, but met with a rebuff, and felt a rankling resentment, which only gradually subsided. I incline towards the second hypothesis. However that may be, the friendship that united Brahms and Clara—a friendship which, like all human relations, had its moments of exaltation and of stagnation—never failed and was only broken by death. And though, as Brahms advanced in life, a certain harshness, not to say coarseness of temperament, which was the natural concomitant of his physical and intellectual vigour, became more and more unpleasantly evident in him, the native nobility and generosity of his nature survived the effects of age and the incense of fame—a nobility and generosity of which

Clara experienced the beneficent effects more than anyone else, at those many moments of her life when she stood in need not only of moral but of material aid. And when Brahms wrote to her, at one such moment: "I love you more than myself, more than anybody or anything whatsoever in the world," we feel that he is speaking the truth.

We can follow the course of Clara's life both in this correspondence and in Litzmann's fine narrative—a life so full of trials, material struggles, and distressing experiences—her husband's agony; the insanity of her son Ludwig, whose existence was for twenty-four years a living death; the decease, at the age of twenty-four, of her youngest son, the most gifted of her children—indeed the only one who had any talent; the death of her daughter Julie at the age of twenty-seven, in the midst of her happiness; the death of her son Ferdinand, who had become a morphia-maniac and had also been sent to a sanatorium, leaving six children for their grandmother to support. And when we see with what heroic strength she met her sad fate and shouldered the burdens that were piled upon her, triumphing over every obstacle, preserving, in the midst of her struggles, her exalted and religious love for her art, which she practised like a sacred office, one cannot but say that there was in her a vital force, a love of life, which could not help spending itself and seeking an outlet for its energies. A woman who had spent her life absorbed in her sorrow, constantly on the watch for news from Endenich—which, alas, never varied—and who, on the death of her beloved husband, had buried herself alive in her memories would never have

been capable of bringing up her seven children by her own labours. And our conclusion is that, if the passionate affection which Brahms felt for her, and which she returned, gave her the strength and courage to discharge with success the hard task which Fate had laid upon her, we must absolve her, if, indeed, she has need of our absolution.

It is true that Clara felt it necessary to give her children an explanation of this strange intimacy. I shall quote the whole passage, leaving it to my readers to test its sincerity. In my opinion, even if she has not told the whole truth, everything she says bears the obvious stamp of veracity. Her explanation dates from the year 1856. "May God send everyone, however unhappy, a consolation that shall bring him happiness and strength. I have you, but you are only children as yet. You hardly knew your father, you were too young to experience deep grief; and so, during those terrible years, you were unable to bring me consolation, but only hope, which could not sustain me in the midst of such suffering. And then came Johannes Brahms. Your father loved and admired him as he did nobody else save Joachim. He came to help me, and, like a faithful friend, to bear all my distress; he gave strength to my heart when it bade fair to break, he raised my courage, and cheered me so far as he was able; in short, he was my friend in every sense of the word." And, growing warmer and more emphatic in tone, as though she had to defend herself against invisible adversaries (who knows? perhaps against her own scruples), she continued: "He and Joachim were the only persons who saw your dear father during his

illness and whom he received with evident pleasure, so long as his reason was still at all lucid. Yes, children, I can tell you that I never loved a friend as I did him. It was the most beautiful spiritual harmony. What I love in him is not his youth, not the satisfaction of my vanity, it is not the freshness of his mind, or his splendidly gifted nature; what I love is his heart, which I have put to the test for years, as no other could have done. At times his demeanour is outwardly rough. The younger musicians recognize his superiority. Who is there that likes admitting this, to himself or to others? This is why they do not like him. Joachim alone expresses his esteem freely, because he is Brahms's equal as an artist. Each of them regards the other with admiration, and it is a noble spectacle, such as one rarely finds. Joachim too, as you know, was a faithful friend to me, but I did not always live side by side with him. And so it was Johannes alone who was my support. Never forget this, dear children, and be grateful in your hearts to the friend who will certainly always be your friend too. Believe what your mother tells you, and do not believe the mean-spirited, jealous people who envy him my love and friendship and who try to attack him and the beautiful relations between us, which they either do not or will not understand." This is a noble, proud avowal, which does Clara great honour, and, in our opinion, settles the question into which the indiscreet and rather low-minded curiosity of some inquirers has probed so persistently.

Clara, then, outlived Robert for forty years. During these forty years, she never ceased working, and the greater part of her efforts was devoted to making

known the music of Schumann and Brahms and winning appreciation for it. All that concerns us here is her propaganda for the benefit of Schumann's music. We have seen, in the course of our story, that Schumann was not appreciated at his true value during his life. We have shown with what opposition Clara was faced when she introduced his A minor Concerto to her audiences in Vienna and Berlin, the two great German musical centres, and with what qualified appreciation the symphonies, trios, and quartets were received in these cities. Even his *Faust* did not win the approval of Leipzig amateurs, though they were better educated than those of Prussia and Austria. Schumann's music, which is so comprehensible to everybody nowadays, seemed difficult, hard to understand, and not very melodious! The Quintet, the *Peri,* and the *Lieder* alone—together with the *Kinderszenen,* which were regarded as being on a lower level—gave universal pleasure during his life. We have seen how Schumann suffered from this coldness on the part of the public, though he never lost confidence in himself and in the value of his creative work. He was sure that posterity would put them in their right place—below Bach and Beethoven, the Titans of music, it is true—but in their proper sphere, and approximately on the same level as Schubert. He himself wrote to Brendel, on September 18, 1849, that those who said he was not appreciated were wrong. The *Zeitschrift* had done justice to him, he said, and the publishers accepted and paid for his works. The *Jugendalbum* met with a greater success than that of most modern works, and so did the *Lieder.* "Where is there a composer," he

asked, "who is universally recognized; or is there any work that is sacrosanct by common consent?"

Clara was to devote her whole talent to making Schumann one of the composers who are "universally recognized." We must note, moreover, that, as Schumann had foreseen, his works made their way of their own accord. Thus, in December 1858, the Second Trio and the F major Quartet met with the greatest success in Vienna, and the critics—above all Hanslick, a warm admirer of the master—were extremely cordial. The year after, Clara wrote to Brahms that he could not imagine how much Schumann was sung and played in Vienna; people had tried to persuade her to play nothing but his music at her three concerts. So Austria was won over to his side, and in 1864 Brahms was able to write that "no musician is more popular in Vienna." Germany did not remain behindhand. All the choral societies were competing with one another for the *Peri,* and gradually Schumann's *Faust* won itself a place, far above that charming youthful work, by the side of the greatest musical works of the century. The piano works and chamber-music attracted the best executants, and even the symphonies began to make their way, though with greater difficulty. As for the *Lieder,* they never ceased to rise in popular favour, and both Stockhausen, a consummate musician, and Jenny Lind contributed by their matchless interpretation towards making their most intimate beauties known. In England Clara was fêted both by the court and the public as no artist has ever been before or since, and in Belgium there are ever-growing groups of Schumann enthusiasts. Clara was able to record

that in Brussels, where the Concerto had once been received so coldly, she played it before an audience of three thousand with enormous success. She also noted happily on January 14, 1868 that "the public understanding of Schumann's works has increased remarkably during recent years. I do not force Robert's music on anybody, but it is a great joy to me to be able to contribute towards the spread of it in response to the demand with which I now meet everywhere." Nor did France lag behind: in 1894 Clara received royalties to the amount of fifteen hundred francs. In Russia Schumann was extremely popular, and both Rubinstein and Tschaikovsky reveal their debt to him, the former in his songs, and the latter in the whole of his music. And it was Clara who did all that was in her power to bring about this widespread diffusion and universal admiration of her great husband's works, both by her masterly execution and by publishing a complete edition of his works, with the untiring assistance of Brahms.

In carrying on this crusade in favour of her husband's and Brahms's works, and of the neo-classicism into which Schumann's essential and persistent romanticism had developed, Clara displayed an extremely fanatical and uncompromising spirit. In spite of the fact that, after her misfortune, Liszt had showered upon her the most delicate tokens of his sorrow and sympathy, she pursued him with a fierce hatred, for it was her profound conviction that he was chiefly responsible for what seemed to her a profanation of music as she understood it. She was horrified at the sensuality of Wagner's operas, though she did not

entirely underrate his genius. And it was she who really inspired or, at any rate, passionately fomented the controversy which arose between the neo-classical and neo-German groups, between what may be called the Leipzig school—Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Brahms —and the Weimar school—Liszt and Wagner. This culminated in the famous appeal, published in March 1860 and signed by Brahms, Joachim, J. O. Grimm, and Bernhard Scholz, protesting against the claim advanced by Brendel's *Zeitschrift*—the review founded by Schumann!—to represent all musicians of merit as sharing in the admiration for the works of the so-called "music of the future." The signatories declared that they could not but "deplore and condemn, as contrary to the innermost essence of music, the works of the leaders and followers of the so-called neo-German school." The appeal naturally called forth rejoinders, and in 1879 the *Bayreuther Blätter* was still seeking vengeance for the attacks on its idol by disagreeable articles attacking Schumann's art.

But these are old controversies into which we need not enter. It may, I think, be said that Clara was unjust to such chivalrous friends as Liszt, unjust to Wagner's art, which she did not understand, and, lastly, unjust to Schumann himself, in that she misunderstood the revolutionary tendencies of his art and doctrines, and represented him as a sort of musical reactionary, steeped in the academic spirit.

But the spell of Schumann's work has been stronger than all the quarrels of the schools. It forms part of the universal history of music. It made its way into the souls of his contemporaries more slowly than that

of other masters, but it took more lasting root. As early as 1873 the Schumann-loving public was so large that it was possible at that date to promote the erection of a monument, which was set up to him at Bonn, at a solemn musical festival, on May 2, 1880.

Thus Schumann attained the lofty goal to which he had hardly dared to look forward even in his most ambitious dreams. And thus, in spite of his last tragic years and his premature death, his life was a fine and an enviable one. What are passing sufferings compared with everlasting fame?

INDEX OF NAMES

Abegg, Meta, 40
Adventlied (Rückert), 184
Alexander Variations, 10, 36
Alexis, Willibald, 33
Allerley aus der Feder Roberts an der Mulde, 20
Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung, 57
Allgemeine Musikzeitung, 77
Arabian Nights, 52
Ariosto, 37
Arnim, Bettina von, 208, 227, 228–9
Auerbach, 177
Avé Lallemant, 220

Bach, 17, 29, 30, 50, 53, 54, 55, 65, 79, 129, 154, 167, 178, 190–1, 239
Ballades (Brahms), 225, 226
Banck, Carl, 91, 96, 101–2, 103, 104, 115–16
Bank, Ludwig, 76
Bargiel, Mariane Tromlitz (Wieck), 148, 151–2, 154, 158, 195, 220, 221
Bargiel, Woldemar, 210
Barth, J. A., 93
Basch, Victor, 18, 81
Bayreuther Blätter, 242
Becker, E. A., 108, 155
Beethoven, 8, 17–18, 30, 56, 57, 63, 65, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 86, 90, 92, 139, 167, 168, 177, 178, 191, 206, 222, 225, 239
Beethoven's Instrumental-Musik (Hoffmann), 58
Beiden Montalti, Die, 19
Bellini, 57, 83, 129
Bendemann, 177, 181, 196
Bennett, William Sterndale, 82, 103–4, 106, 154, 190
Beppo, 5
Berger, Ludwig, 29, 71, 76, 82, 103–4, 105
Berlioz, 65, 81, 92, 144, 176, 191, 210
Bible, 212, 218
Bildergalerie der berühmten Männer, mit beigefügtem Texte, 12
Blätter und Blümchen aus der goldenen Aue, 19
Brahms, 208, 209–10, 211, 220, 222–3, 224–7, 228, 229, 230, 232–9, 240, 241, 242
Braut von Messina (Schiller), 198
Brendel, Franz, 65, 77, 176, 209, 210, 239, 242
Bülow, Hans von, 181
Burns, 179
Byron, 5, 11, 19, 20, 27, 175, 184, 189

Cäcilia, 77
Caprices en forme de valse (Clara Wieck), 52, 53, 102
Carl, Henriette, 103–4
Carus, Agnes, 9, 15, 20, 27, 53, 54, 55
Carus, Dr., 9, 20
Castelli, 77–8
Charlotte, Tsaritsa, 173, 174
Cherubini, 56, 82
Childe Harold, 5
Chopin, 49, 52, 58, 59, 60, 63, 65, 76, 77, 81, 95, 102, 103–4, 126, 176, 191
Cibbini, Mme de, 137–8
Cicero, 12
Clara Schumann (Litzmann), vi, 93, 232
Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms, Briefe, vii, 233
Concerto for piano, op. 7 (Clara Wieck), 102
Concerto in A minor (Hummel), 39

Concerto in G minor (Mendelssohn), 94–5
Concerto, Seventh (Field), 82
Coriolan (Schumann), 19
Cornelius, 196
Corsair, The (Byron), 175, 182
Crito, 11
Crociato, Il, 83
Cumberland, Frederica, Duchess of, 105
Czerny, 9, 40, 78

Dahms, Walter, 15, 19, 21
Dannecker, 33
David, Ferdinand, 103–4, 183, 195
Deutsche Tänze (Schubert), 88–9
Devrient, Eduard, 177
Devrient, Wilhelmine Schröder-, *see* Schröder-Devrient, Wilhelmine
Diabelli, 134
Diamond (Hebbel), 182
Dichter und der Komponist, Der (Hoffmann), 58
Dichtergarten, 212, 218
Dietrich, Albert, 210, 215, 218, 219
Döhler, 126
Döhner, 7
Don Giovanni, 57
Don Juan Fantasia (Chopin), 58, 59
Dorn, Heinrich, 49, 52, 76, 98
Droste-Hülstoff, Annette von, 179
Düring, Georg, 33

Ehlers, 195
Eichendorff, 24, 181
Eichner, 9
Einert, 150, 154–5
Elijah (Mendelssohn), 81
Erinnerungen (Eugenie Schumann), vii, 61
Ernst, Dr., 197
Euryanthe, 138

Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier (Hoffmann), 58
Faust (Goethe), 175
Ferdinand I, Emperor of Austria, 160
Feste Burg, Ein', 215
Fichte, 31
Fidelio, 57, 59, 150, 203
Field, John, 29, 53, 82
Fischer, Pastor, 151, 152, 156
Fischhof, Joseph, 76, 137
Flechsig, 11, 14–15, 17, 22, 26, 27
Flegeljahre, 18, 57
Flying Dutchman, The, 83
Forcellini, 12
Franconi, 83
Franz, Robert, 82, 210
Frederick, Prince, of the Netherlands, 211
Frederick Augustus II, King of Saxony, 186
Frederick William III, King of Prussia, 157
Frères Laudendörfer, Les, 19
Frick, G. W., 77
Fricken, Baron von, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74
Fricken, Ernestine von, 69, 70, 71, 72–3, 74, 75, 96, 97, 98–9, 104, 121, 124–5, 136, 139, 142, 151, 153
Friedrich, Fritz, 76

Gade, Niels W., 175, 183, 195, 210
Gang nach dem Eisenhammer, Der, 9–10
Geist, Der, 20
Genoveva (Hebbel), 182
Genoveva (Tieck), 182
Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker (Schumann), 18, 78, 86, 87, 88, 94–5, 103
Gleim, 19
Glock, 30
Gluck, 190–1
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 4, 11, 12, 19, 30, 33, 35, 165, 175, 189, 208, 212, 213, 223
Goethe, Walter von, 103
Goldene Topf, Das (Hoffman
Grabau, Henrietta, 92
Grädener, 17, 195
Grenzboten, Die, 107
Grillparzer, Camillo, 6, 57
Grillparzer, Franz, 57, 131
Grimm, Julius Otto, 220, 222
Günther, Frau, 195

Halm, 179
Hamlet Overture (Joachim), 206
Handel, 65, 190–1
Hanslick, 84, 201, 240
Härtel, 226
Hartmann, E., 76, 93
Hasenclever, Dr., 216, 219, 221
Haslinger, 134
Hauptmann, M., 195
Haydn, 4, 9, 37, 56, 65, 77, 79, 190–1
Hebbel, 19, 182, 189, 213
Hebrew Melodies (Byron), 189
Heine, E., 83
Heine, Heinrich, 24, 45
Helena, Grand Duchess, 172
Heller, Stephen, 76, 82, 91, 102
Hempel, Liddy, 16, 17
Henry IV Overture (Joachim), 227
Hensel, Fanny, 181
Henselt, 82, 173, 178
Herlossohn, 62
Hermann and Dorothea, 179
Hérold, 83
Hertel, J., 21
Herz, Heinrich, 28, 40, 63, 78, 105, 126, 167
Hesperus, 16
Hildebrand, 197
Hiller, Ferdinand, 56, 82, 177, 181, 183, 190, 193, 195, 197, 203, 220, 230
Hoffmann, E. T. A., 18–19, 58, 66, 89, 106, 212, 213
Homer, 11
Horace, 12
Horn, Moritz, 199
Houwald, 11
Hübner, 177, 181, 196
Huguenots, Les, 83
Hummel, 9, 29, 39, 40, 42, 47, 82
Hünten, 28, 63, 78

Invitation to the Waltz (Weber), 46
Iris, 57, 77

Jacobi, 173
Jansen, F. G., 107, 184–5
Jean Paul, see Richter, Jean Paul
Jessonda, 57
Joachim, Joseph, 181, 183, 195, 202, 206–7, 208, 210, 211, 212, 220, 224, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 237–8, 242
Judith (Hebbel), 182
Jugendbriefe (Schumann), vi
Juniusabende, 19

Kalbeck, Max, vii
Kalkbrenner, 28, 29
Kalliwoda, 56
Kant, 31
Kater Murr, 18, 58
Keferstein, R., 76, 77, 160
Kerner, 30
Kirchner, Theodor, 210
Klavier und Gesang (Wieck), 28
Klopstock, 4
Knorr, Julius, 29–30, 60, 76, 91, 93
Komet, 62
Kossmaly, 76, 77, 168
Krägen, 63
Kreisleriana (Hoffmann), 58
Krug, 31
Kuhlau, 56
Kuhnau, Johann, 55
Kulmann, Elisabeth, 199
Künstler, Die, 20
Kuntsch, 8, 195
Kurrer, Dr. von, 24
Kurrer, Fräulein von, 24

Lachner, 82
Laidlaw, Anna Robena, 105–7
Lallemant, Avé, *see* Avé Lallemant
Lexicon totius latinitatis, 12
Liebesfrühling (Rückert), 167
Lind, Jenny, 180, 181, 194, 240
Lindauer, Erdmann, 74
Lipinski, 103–4
List, Emilie, 71, 146, 147, 148
Liszt, v, 49, 65, 82, 84, 103, 126–7, 134–5, 160–1, 167, 168–9, 176, 178, 184–5, 190–1, 195, 200, 201, 202, 209, 210, 224, 241, 242
Litzmann, B., vi, vii, 72, 93, 109, 232, 233, 234, 236
Logier, 28
Lorenz, Oswald, 77, 137, 176
Löwe, Ludwig, 82

Lühe, 63, 76
Luther, 198, 215
Lyser, Johann Peter, 63, 91

Manfred (Byron), 184
Marpurg, 50
Marschner, 56, 57, 82
Marseillaise, 144
Mechetti, 134
Meinardus, 202
Mendelssohn family, 162, 181
Mendelssohn, Fanny, *see* Hensel Fanny
Mendelssohn, Felix, 20, 63, 81, 82, 83, 84, 92, 94–5, 103–4, 126, 159, 162, 168, 170, 172, 175, 176, 178, 181, 183, 184–5, 190, 191, 195, 208, 220, 221, 228, 242
Mendelssohn, Paul, 220
Meyerbeer, 83, 180, 184, 194
Milton, 5
Mittermayer, 33, 34
Mongold, C. V., 210
Morlacchi, 57
Moscheles, 8–9, 39, 42, 48, 56, 82, 126, 183, 195, 202
Mozart, 4, 9, 56, 57, 59, 65, 77, 79, 83, 92, 190–1
Müller Dr., of Düsseldorf, 197
Müller, August Theodor, 97
Müller, C. G., 82
Müller, G. W., 50, 61
Müller, Robert, 105
Müllerlieder (Schubert), 22
Müllner, 11
Musikalische Bauersprüche (Wieck), 28
Musikalische Stationen (Hanslick), 84
Musikalische Zeitung (Vienna), 57

Nachtlied (Hebbel), 189
Nanny (Clara Wieck's maid), 110, 128, 139
Naumann, Ernst, 210
Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, 64, 66, 68, 76, 77, 78–92, 93, 96, 101, 103, 106, 137, 138, 143, 145, 152, 160–1, 168, 169, 176, 209, 212, 225, 239, 242
Neujahrslied (Rückert), 192
Nicholas I, Tsar of Russia, 173, 174
Niebuhr, 222
Nietzsche, 177
Night Thoughts, 5
Norman, Ludwig, 210
Nozze di Figaro, Le, 57

Odyssey, 11
Onslow, 56
Ortlepp, Ernst, 63, 76
Otto, Franz, 63, 76

Paganini, 40, 52
Pasta, 35
Patsch, Nanni, 16
Peters, Dr., 221, 222
Petrarch, 37
Pfundt, 53, 116
Phantasus (Tieck), 65
Philoctetes, 11
Pilzing, 9
Plato, 11, 212
Pleyel, Camilla, 157
Pleyel, Ignaz, 78
Pohl, Richard, 198, 202
Prophète, Le, 194
Püttlingen, Vesque von, 137–8

Rakemann, Ludwig, 91, 136
Raphael, 81, 223
Raupach, 19
Reinecke, 195
Reinick, 179, 181, 182
Reissiger, Karl Gottlieb, 63
Rellstab, 57, 77
Reuss, Count, 133
Reuter, 76, 136, 148
Revue et gazette musicale, 126
Richarz, Dr., 220, 221, 222, 223, 229, 230
Richter, Frau Jean Paul, 24
Richter, Jean Paul, 4, 12–19, 2[illegible] 24, 26, 30, 37–8, 39, 58, [illegible] 166, 212, 213
Richter, K. E., 21
Rienzi, 83, 84
Ries, 82
Rietschel, 181
Righini, 9

Ritterszenen und Mönchsnerzahlungen, 5
Robert the Devil, 180
Rollwentzel, 24
Romances (Brahms), 226
Rondo for piano duet, op. 107 (Schubert), 39
Rosen, Gisbert, 24, 32, 33, 34, 36
Rosengarten, 19
Rossini, 35, 57, 63, 82, 83
Rubinstein, Anton, 241
Rückert, 167, 173, 182, 184, 192

St. Paul (Mendelssohn), 81, 95
Sallust, 12
Sarbiewski, 12
Schadow, 196, 197
Schäffer, Julius, 210
Scherzo (Brahms), 226
Schiller, Ernst Friedrich Wilhelm, 222
Schiller, J. C. Friedrich von, 4, 11, 19, 198, 212, 222, 223
Schilling, Dr., 142
Schladebach, 83
Schnabel, 173
Schneider, 56
Scholz, Bernhard, 242
Schröder-Devrient, Wilhelmine, 150, 181
Schubert, —, of Hamburg, 195
Schubert, Franz, 20, 22, 29, 30, 39, 40, 52, 63, 65, 77, 78, 80, 88–9, 139, 159, 239
Schulze, 11, 19, 20
Schumann (Basch, in *Les Maîtres de la musique*), 18, 81
Schumann, Clara (wife), *see* Wieck, Clara
Schumann, Edward (brother), 145, 147
Schumann, Elise (daughter), 172, 214
Schumann, Emilie (sister), 7, 11
Schumann, Emilie (sister-in-law), 57
Schumann, Eugenie (daughter), vii, 61
Schumann, Felix (son), 177, 221, 224, 233, 236
Schumann, Ferdinand (son), 177, 189, 236
Schumann, Friedrich August Gottlieb (father), 5–6, 8, 10, 44, 147
Schumann, Friedrich Gottlob (grandfather), 5
Schumann, Johanna Christine Schnabel (mother), 6, 7, 10, 11, 23, 25, 26, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45–6, 47, 50, 61, 62, 63, 68, 71, 75, 76, 99–100, 103
Schumann, Julie (daughter), 177, 236
Schumann, Julius (brother), 24, 67
Schumann, Karl (brother), 7, 24, 186
Schumann, Ludwig (son), 177, 236
Schumann, Marie (daughter), 168, 187, 234
Schumann, Pauline (sister-in-law), 195
Schumann, Robert: birth, 4; ancestry, 5–6; childhood, 7–10; schooling, 7, 9, 21; earliest piano instruction, 7–9; interest in literature, 8, 11–20; hears Moscheles, 8–9; improvisation, 10, 36, 39; holiday travels (1827), 16–17; youthful literary work, 19, 20, 21, 22; journey to Bayreuth, etc. (1828), 24–5; at the University of Leipzig, 24–31; first acquaintance with the Wiecks, 27–8, 29; dislike for musical theory, 29, 43; as pupil of Wieck, 29–32, 42–4, 46–9; at the University of Heidelberg, 31, 33, 34–5, 36–44; journey to Switzerland and Italy, 35–6; as pianist, 36; abandons study of law, 40–4; abandons career as professional pianist, 48–9; study of musical theory, 49–51; psychical malady, 51, 66–8, 74, 125, 153–4, 162–3, 174, 175, 177–8, 179, 202–3, 207, 212–32; critical writings, 57–60, 62, 63–6, 78–92, 160–1, 179, 209–10, 212; foundation of the Davidsbündler, 60, 63–6; physical appearance, 69; editorship of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 76–92, 137–8, 143, 176; courtship of Clara

Wieck, 54–5, 97–9, 100–62; made honorary doctor of the University of Jena, 160; marriage, 162; appointed professor at the Liepzig Conservatoire, 170; as a teacher, 170–1; tour to Russia, 172–4; residence at Dresden, 176–96; quarrel with Liszt, 184–5, 190; and the Dresden insurrection, 186–8; at Düsseldorf, 196–220; tour to Holland, 210–11; interest in table-turning, 213–15; attempts suicide, 219; enters asylum at Bonn, 220; death, 230; estimate of his own works, 239.
Schumann, Rosalie (sister-in-law), 53, 57, 67
Schumann, Therese Semmel (sister-in-law), 6, 26, 35, 57, 72, 101, 103, 104, 140, 145, 148
Schunke, Ludwig, 64, 71, 76, 91, 93
Scott, Sr Walter, 5, 19, 106
Sedlnitzky, 137–8
Seidl, Arthur, 87
Selene, 19
Semmel, 26, 35
Semper, 188
Serapionsbrüder, Die (Hoffmann), 58, 66
Serre, 107, 137, 140, 187
Shakspere, 81, 212, 213
Simrock, 226
Sire, Simonin de, 133
Sobolewski, 91
Soirées musicales (Clara Wieck), 102
Sonata (Second), in F sharp minor (Brahms), 226
Sophocles, 11
Sörgel, 30
Spohr, 56, 57, 82, 83
Spontini, 82
Stabat Mater (Rossini), 83
Stephanie, Grand Duchess of Baden, 36, 37
Stegmayer, 76
Stockhausen, 240
Symphonie fantastique (Berlioz), 81
Symphony in C major (Schubert), 77, 80, 139
Symphony in C. minor (Fifth) (Beethoven), 214
Symphony in D minor (Ninth) (Beethoven), 56, 79, 90, 177, 191

Tacitus, 12
Täglichsbeck, 30
Tannhäuser, 84–5
Taubert, 82, 87–8
Tausch, 204–6
Templer und Jüdin, 57
Thalberg, 28, 78, 126, 167, 178
Thibault, 33, 34, 37, 42
Thrus, 69
Tieck, 24, 65, 182
Tigranes, 9
Tillmann, Canon Dr., 21
Titan, 13, 16, 17
Töpken, 91
Tschaikovsky, 241

Valse romantique (Clara Wieck), 102
Vanhals, 78
Variations (Kalkbrenner), 29
Variations on a theme by Schumann in F sharp minor (Brahms), 224–5
Verhulst, 211
Voigt, 153
Voigt, Frau, 153, 157
Voigt, Henriette, 18, 71–2, 73, 92

Wagner, Richard, v, 76, 83, 84–5, 177, 181, 182, 186, 188, 191, 193, 209, 210, 241–2
Wasielewski, 75, 197–8, 213–14
Weber, Anselm, 9
Weber, Gottfried, 50, 77
Weber, C. M. von, 4, 9, 10, 46, 82, 83, 138
Weisse, 19
Wendt, 63
Werner, Zacharias, 19
Wernlich, 43
Wieck, Cäcilie, 70
Wieck, Clementine Fechner, 5
107, 111, 117, 150
Wieck, Clara, vi, vii, 11, 28,
43, 47, 49, 51, 52–5, 60, 61
69–70, 71, 74, 75, 84, 92, 5

105, 107–25, 126, 127–37, 139–40, 141–4, 145, 146–60, 161–3, 166–73, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 180–1, 183, 184–8, 189–90, 191–2, 193, 194–5, 196–8, 200, 202–3, 204, 205, 206–8, 210–12, 213–42
Wieck, Friedrich, 27–9, 31–2, 35, 39, 42–4, 47, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 60, 63, 69, 70, 72, 76, 91, 93, 99, 100–1, 102, 104, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 122, 123, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 136, 139, 140, 141, 143–4, 146–7, 149–50, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156–7, 158–9, 160, 162, 166, 171–2, 177, 195
Wiedebein, A. G., 30
Wiener Anzeiger, 77
Wildenhahn, Pastor, 162
Wilsing, C. F., 210
Wittgenstein, Princess, 200
Wohltemperirte Klavier, Das, 30, 167

Young, 5

Zedwitz, Count, 73, 142, 153
Zedwitz, Countess Franziska Ernestine von, 71, 73, 74
Zeitschrift der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft, 107
Zimmermann, 24
Zuccalmaglio, 65, 76, 91

This book
is set in Garamond, a
modern rendering of the type
first cut in the sixteenth century by
Claude Garamont (1510-1561). He was a
pupil of Geofroy Tory and is believed to have
based his letters on the Venetian models, although he
introduced a number of important differences, and it is
to him that we owe the letter which we know as Old
Style. He gave to his letters a certain elegance and a
feeling of movement which won for their creator an
immediate reputation and the patronage of the French
King, Francis I.

SET UP, ELECTROTYPED, PRINTED AND
BOUND BY H. WOLFF ESTATE, NEW
YORK · PAPER MANUFACTURED
BY S. D. WARREN CO.,
BOSTON, MASSA-
CHUSETTS

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

124 963

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY